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**CRISIS DETERRENCE IN THE TAIWAN STRAIT**

**BY**

**CHAPLAIN (COLONEL) DOUGLAS MCCREEDY  
United States Army**

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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by

CHAPLAIN (COLONEL) DOUGLAS MCCREADY  
Army National Guard

Lieutenant Colonel Debra Little  
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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## ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Chaplain (Colonel) Douglas McCready

TITLE: Crisis Deterrence in the Taiwan Strait

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 28 March 2001

PAGES: 65

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

For more than fifty years, Taiwan's unresolved international status has been the cause of repeated crises in East Asia. While the parties involved would be willing to live with the status quo, the domestic political transformation of Taiwan has called the status quo into question. China, Taiwan, the United States, and Japan have national interests in how the conflict is resolved, and these interests will be difficult to reconcile. By conventional measures, China cannot gain Taiwan by force before the end of this decade. Chinese leaders believe by using asymmetrical means they will be able to overcome the military advantage of the U.S. and Taiwan. While the U.S. will be able to delay Chinese action against Taiwan, it is unlikely to be successful at long-term deterrence. Deterrence as used against the Soviet Union during the Cold War will not be effective with China without significant modification. The cultural divide affects not only deterrence theory, but also how China and the U.S. understand and communicate with each other. Crisis deterrence in the Taiwan Strait is unlikely to succeed due to conflicting national interests and several crucial mutual misperceptions.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	iii
<b>CRISIS DETERRENCE IN THE TAIWAN STRAIT .....</b>	1
<b>HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT .....</b>	3
<b>PERCEPTIONS AND MISPERCEPTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS .....</b>	5
<b>MISCUES DURING THE 1995-96 TAIWAN STRAIT CRISIS .....</b>	11
<b>INTERESTS .....</b>	13
<b>CAPABILITIES .....</b>	16
<b>INTENTIONS .....</b>	23
<b>CRISIS DETERRENCE AND COERCIVE DIPLOMACY .....</b>	26
<b>OPTIONS .....</b>	30
<b>CHINA'S OPTIONS .....</b>	32
<b>TAIWAN'S OPTIONS .....</b>	39
<b>U.S. OPTIONS .....</b>	40
<b>JAPAN'S ROLE .....</b>	44
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	45
<b>ENDNOTES .....</b>	49
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	59



## CRISIS DETERRENCE IN THE TAIWAN STRAIT

There is a growing consensus that the Taiwan Strait has become the Asian flashpoint with the greatest potential for direct U.S. military involvement. Taiwan is only one part of the complex relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China,<sup>1</sup> but it is the most volatile part. A December 2000 RAND study of foreign policy and national security issues concluded, "Critical differences between Mainland China and Taiwan about the future of their relations make the Taiwan issue the most intractable and dangerous East-Asian flashpoint – and the one with the greatest potential for bringing the United States and China into confrontation in the near future."<sup>2</sup> This somber conclusion reflects the nearly unanimous view of American and Chinese specialists in Sino-American relations. The concern only increases when we consider China has both nuclear weapons and a primitive but improving intercontinental delivery system. More broadly, "the challenge presented by a rising China is the principal issue facing American policy."<sup>3</sup> Denny Roy puts this into regional perspective: "Taiwan's security problem is Asia's security problem: cross-strait conflict would disrupt regional trade and force other Asian states to side with or against the People's Republic of China. Taiwan's security problem is also America's: a likely consequence of such a conflict would be unambiguous Chinese opposition to, and corresponding action against, the U.S. military presence in Asia."<sup>4</sup>

The question facing U.S. policy makers is whether they can deter the People's Republic of China (PRC) from its declared willingness to use force to achieve political control over Taiwan. If so, how? If not, what alternatives does the U.S. have? The challenge facing the U.S. government is to convince both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan to refrain from precipitous action toward unification and independence respectively. This will be much less difficult with respect to Taiwan than the PRC.

For 50 years, the deliberate American policy of strategic ambiguity has successfully deterred both the PRC and Taiwan from major conflict. Domestic developments in both the PRC and Taiwan are requiring all three parties to reevaluate their policies and increasing the likelihood of the use of force by the PRC to gain control over Taiwan. The future success of American deterrence is questionable. The stated American policy that resolution of the conflict, whatever the result might be, must be by peaceful means appears increasingly unlikely and does not adequately address U.S. interest in the region. That the U.S. can delay Chinese actions is almost certain, that it can indefinitely deter Chinese action is unlikely.<sup>5</sup>

This paper considers the Taiwan problem in terms of deterrence theory and its application across cultures to see under what conditions the PRC might be convinced not to use force

to resolve the Taiwan situation to its satisfaction. This study also examines the perceptions and misperception of each of the parties involved; their interests, capabilities, and possible intentions; and how the PRC intends to deter U.S. intervention in the Taiwan Strait. An examination of the options available to each party concludes by suggesting the most likely courses of action and ways to increase the likelihood of successful U.S. deterrence in the Taiwan Strait.

The complexity of the Taiwan Strait situation suggests any future American attempt at crisis deterrence will be exceedingly difficult and should not expect success unless at least one party to the conflict makes enormous concessions to the others. The tangled relationship involves both deterrence and coercive diplomacy on a regular basis. As the U.S. seeks to deter Chinese military action and Taiwanese provocation in the Strait, the PRC seeks to deter U.S. intervention and formal Taiwanese independence. China is also seeking to coerce Taiwan to reverse its tentative steps toward formal independence. A dangerous aspect of the relationship is the confrontation between an inconsistent U.S. policy regarding Taiwan and the PRC and a PRC that exhibits simultaneous characteristics of paranoia, entitlement, victimization, and arrogance arising out of its history. This paranoia leads China to view all actions of potential adversaries as directed primarily against China. Its historical self-image as the paramount state in Asia causes China to view the behavior of regional rivals, the U.S. and Japan, as intended to weaken or marginalize China and deny it its rightful place in the international community. The complexity of China's self-image can be seen in its simultaneous expectation of receiving the prestige and authority of a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council with the right to a decisive say on events in Asia, the claim to foreign aid from developed nations, the expectation of the preferential treatment given to developing nations, and opposition to any modification of the United Nations Charter to permit Japan a permanent Security Council seat because this would dilute Chinese primacy as the spokesman for Asian interests.

Both the U.S. and the PRC see themselves as occupying the moral high ground in their international dealings.<sup>6</sup> This makes compromise and communication difficult because each presumes it is in the right and the other is acting wrongfully and must be brought around to its way of thinking. This moral self-image is deeply ingrained in both Chinese and American culture.

The most desirable outcome would be for China to transform into a pluralistic, democratic society where Taiwan could be accommodated and feel comfortable but not necessarily required to integrate politically with the mainland. This is highly unlikely in the short-term, so we need to plan now for alternatives. This study explores a range of alternative courses of action with the intent that good crisis management will make a long-term peaceful solution possible.

That the Taiwan Strait is the locus of crisis, how there came to be a state on Taiwan separate from Mainland China, and U.S. involvement in the situation are all matters of recent history. Without a sense of the post-World War II history of the region, nothing else about its potential for crisis will make sense.

## HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT

The conflict in the Taiwan Strait involving the United States, People's Republic of China, and Taiwan dates from the early days of the Korean War in 1950. Jurisdictional claims to the island are shrouded in nationalistic myths of the PRC, Taiwan, and their respective international advocates, although China only gained control of the island in the 17th century. The relevant background to the conflict is that Taiwan was a Japanese colony during World War II and had been so since the Japanese victory over China in 1895. Chiang Kai-shek, the wartime leader of China, insisted the restoration Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan be included in the 1943 Cairo declaration of Allied leaders. Prior to this, Taiwan does not appear to have figured in the concerns of Mainland Chinese, Nationalist or Communist. Following Japan's surrender, Nationalist Chinese soldiers occupied the island. Their initially brutal occupation of the island only moderated after American intercession.

As the forces under Mao Zedong successively defeated Nationalist armies during the Chinese Civil War, the Nationalists found themselves by 1950 limited to control of Taiwan, the Pescadores Islands, and several groups of small islands just offshore of Mainland China. At this point, conquest of Taiwan became a major goal of the Chinese Communists as they sought to bring the civil war to a successful conclusion.<sup>7</sup> In late 1949, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff advised President Truman that Taiwan was strategically important, but the United States was too overextended militarily to defend it.<sup>8</sup> They expected the PRC to invade and conquer the island in late 1950 or early 1951. Some State Department officials, including George Kennan, proposed the U.S. take direct control of Taiwan and ask the United Nations to hold a plebiscite on the island to decide its future.<sup>9</sup> They favored distancing the U.S. government from Chiang Kai-shek and offering Taiwan's population the opportunity for independence or union with the mainland. This would have required revoking the Taiwan portion of the Cairo Declaration.<sup>10</sup> Events developed too rapidly for this proposal to gain a hearing. Truman's interposition of the U.S. Seventh Fleet between Taiwan and the mainland in response to the North Korean attack on June 25, 1950 frustrated both PRC invasion plans and alternatives to U.S. support for the

Kuomintang on Taiwan. In late 1950, the PRC probably could have invaded Taiwan successfully.

Thus, since 1950, the Taiwan Strait has been a source of international tension. In 1954-55 and 1958, this tension involved military force and the potential for escalation. A 1962 crisis was less serious. Until the U.S. opening to China in 1972, the PRC harassed the offshore islands with every other day artillery fire. After the warming of U.S.-PRC relations, China appeared willing to live with the status quo for decades with relations between the PRC and Taiwan gradually becoming friendlier. The evolution of democracy on Taiwan since 1987, however, has transformed what had been a relatively stable environment once again into a source of regional tension. This time, the reason was that Taiwan's move toward democratic government appeared to imply a move toward *formal* independence of the mainland and a denial of the one-China policy that both the PRC and the Nationalist government on Taiwan had affirmed since 1949. This led to military confrontation between the PRC and the U.S. in 1995-96 and periods of tension during the summer of 1999 and in early 2000. Several of these periods of tension had the potential to become large-scale wars, due as much to misperception and miscalculation by one party or another as to conflicting national interests.

This context shows the complexity of the conflict includes elements of history and geography; the experience of colonialism, a world war, the Cold War; domestic interests in four political entities (U.S., PRC, Taiwan, and Japan); and the East Asia-Pacific strategic balance.

The experience of repeated conflict in the Taiwan Strait during the past half-century has resulted in a variety of mutual perceptions and misperceptions on the part of each of the political entities involved as they have learned and mislearned the lessons of each conflict. China and Taiwan have sharply different views of Japan's proper international role as a result of their different colonial and World War II experiences. Both China and Taiwan have an image of the other that does not fully reflect the history of its development or its aspirations. The PRC ignores that Taiwan has had a separate history and developmental path for more than a century. Both the PRC and the U.S. view each other through the lens of their participation in the Korean War and handling of the Taiwan Strait crises since 1954. Japan's images of its American ally and Chinese neighbor are based on their words and deeds, particularly during the last 25 years. Some of these perceptions are well grounded, but others lack substance. Both lack of understanding and misunderstanding can spark a new Taiwan Strait crisis as easily as can irreconcilable national interests. This study will argue that each of these conditions is characteristic of the U.S.-PRC-Taiwan relationship.

Chinese leaders believe that had the U.S. not intervened in 1950, they would have successfully invaded Taiwan and concluded their civil war. There remains a residue of bitterness among Chinese leaders toward the U.S. dating back to the earliest days of the PRC and even earlier, when the U.S. sided with the Chinese Nationalists during much of the 1945-49 civil war. This distrust prompted PRC intervention in Korea in late 1950. Despite American assurances to the contrary, PRC leaders viewed the attempted reunification of Korea under the Seoul regime as one part of a concerted American attack on the PRC's continued existence. Believing war between China and the U.S. was inevitable, PRC leaders decided their best hope lay in choosing the time and place for that war.<sup>11</sup>

## **PERCEPTIONS AND MISPERCEPTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Wars result most often from real conflicts of national interest. They may also, and too often do, arise from the misunderstandings and misperceptions between nations. John Stoessinger considers misperception the most important single precipitating factor in the outbreak of war.<sup>12</sup> In many cases, misunderstanding and misperception exacerbate the clash of national interests. The situation becomes more complicated when adversaries have different cultural backgrounds and different histories. During the past 60 years, the United States has been involved in three major Asian wars: with Japan, in Korea with the PRC, and in South Vietnam. In each case, misperceptions held by both sides played a major role. In the Korean case, better understanding and clearer communication between the PRC and the U.S. might even have averted war. Since 1950, China and the U.S. have confronted each other several times in the Taiwan Strait; misperceptions, misunderstandings, and miscommunication brought the two nations close to war on more than one of those occasions.<sup>13</sup>

This does not mean conflict of national interest is not involved. For China, the U.S., Taiwan, and even Japan, the resolution of Taiwan's international status involved important, even vital, national interests. Probably the greatest misunderstanding in the entire conflict scenario is the belief, prevalent in both the U.S. and China, that the U.S. has no significant national interest at stake. This mistake alone could cause the two nations to stumble into war in the Taiwan Strait. Therefore, it is imperative that U.S. political leaders define and explain, both to the American public and Chinese decision makers, what interests it has, why they are important, and how the U.S. is prepared to defend them.

What could possibly be so important about Taiwan that U.S. leaders should speak and act as forcefully as they have on several occasions? The U.S. has a legal commitment under

the Taiwan Relations Act to support Taiwan in defending itself against forcible integration into China; it also has a moral obligation going back half a century to provide for Taiwan's defense. This moral obligation has only become stronger in the decade and a half since Taiwan has taken the path of democracy. American failure to keep its word regarding Taiwan would cause regional allies to doubt U.S. commitment to them. In Japan's case, this could lead to rearmament and even development of a nuclear capability backed up by a long-range missile delivery system. This is in no one's interest, least of all China's. Finally, with China's global ambitions and desire for Asian hegemony, abandonment of Taiwan would be followed by U.S. loss of influence in the Asia-Pacific region and an increase in China's ability to control the sea lines of communication Japan and South Korea need for their economic well-being and domestic stability. Some who do not see Taiwan's democratic society, the security of Japan, and the credibility of American commitments as vital interests, view conflict in the Strait as a danger to the peace and stability of the region. For them, regional peace constitutes a vital American interest.<sup>14</sup> In any case, what happens in the Taiwan Strait is a concern for the United States and it needs to understand and proclaim this interest. Not to do so would weaken whatever ability the United States has to deter China from using force against Taiwan and encourage China to act on its declared intention of gaining political control over Taiwan.

In the Taiwan Strait case, the problem of misperception and misunderstanding includes a difference of cultures, and for the U.S. a lack of agreement on what constitutes the relevant Chinese culture. Alistair Iain Johnston has recently challenged the conventional wisdom about China by suggesting modern Chinese strategic thinking is not simply a repetition of the ancient classics such as Sun Zi's *Art of War*. Instead, China's strategic culture resembles much more the hard *realpolitik* of western international relations theory with a readiness for flexibility.<sup>15</sup> Johnston also found the PRC has been much less reluctant to use force in strategic concerns involving territory than have other major powers.<sup>16</sup> This contrasts with the image of China (which is promoted by the PRC) of China as a gentle Confucian nation that must be sorely provoked before it will resort to force. Which of these interpretations is correct makes a difference in how the U.S. should approach the possibility of conflict in the Taiwan Strait. Chinese misperceptions of the world around it are affected by its history of xenophobia, a sense of having been humiliated by the West and Japan, and a measure of paranoia.

Misperceptions come in several varieties. The one that comes most naturally to mind is when the other party incorrectly interprets what we have said or done. No less serious, although much more difficult for us to understand, is the misperception where we communicate with the other party in a way it cannot understand or finds unconvincing because we do not see

that party as it really is. This happens when we fail to understand the other party's culture and history, where our actions and words appear to conflict, or where our message seems unbelievable. The second kind of misperception frequently leads to the first kind. A third kind of misperception involves how each party sees itself. Few nations see themselves as others see them, but they are prone to believe everyone else does see them as they see themselves. Each of these forms of misperception has occurred more than once in the century and a half relationship between China and the United States – the 1949 communist revolution in China only made it more acute.

Those unfamiliar with their adversary's culture often presume their adversary looks at the world and at the issues being contested in the same way they do.<sup>17</sup> They tend to project their own cultural values and historical experiences on to their adversary. In a conflict situation, this means each side misjudges the price its adversary is willing to pay, the suffering it is willing to endure, and what constitutes a compelling deterrent to that adversary. They have difficulty seeing how their actions will affect their adversary domestically, regionally, and internationally. They also believe their own actions are as transparent to their adversary as to themselves and do not understand why their adversary would look for a hidden agenda. They forget people see what they expect to see and interpret the unfamiliar in terms of the familiar. This means they interpret our actions in terms of their expectation, not our intention. People also are prone to see as intentional what in reality is accident, unintended consequence, or just plain muddling through.<sup>18</sup>

Neither the U.S. nor China has considered sufficiently how the other country views it in terms of their relationship over the past 150 years. Each country knows full well what the other has done to it, but it thinks much less about what it has done or what the other thinks it has done to the other country. Each sees itself in terms of its intentions and interests – which it puts in the best light – not the other country's perceptions and experience of it. This does not mean we need to agree with the other country's actions or beliefs, only that it is essential we try to understand the other country on its terms. Then we can predict better how it will interpret and respond to our words and actions and craft our messages in a way more likely to be understood by the Chinese in the way we intend them to be understood.

There are at least four areas of mutual misperception whose correction is necessary for peace in the Taiwan Strait. Although their revision will not remove the conflict of national interests involved, it will enable us to see that conflict more clearly. These areas are the nature of the national interest involved, the level of commitment to that interest, the governmental decision-making process, and the attitudes that drive each nation's international behavior. Ameri-

can China watchers and Chinese America watchers now have a good sense of the other nation in each of these areas, but they do not appear to have been able to communicate this to their national leadership. Due to the nature of the regime, the problem is greater on the part of Chinese leaders. What makes correcting these misperceptions and misunderstandings so difficult is that people tend to see what they want to see, especially when they have made an investment in that conclusion. An example of this is that there appears to be a direct correlation between American estimates of Chinese strength and of Chinese intentions: those who see a strong China also see an aggressive China and argue for a policy of containment, those who see a weak China also see a relatively benign China and argue for a policy of engagement.

Chinese leaders appear to have a basic misunderstanding of how the U.S. government is organized and how it makes policy. Senior Chinese leaders do not appear to understand the balance of power among the branches of government, particularly the limits to presidential authority. They have a hard time understanding American idealism and a political system so complex that even the president cannot ignore special interests.<sup>19</sup> Some of China's American watchers do understand the process, but appear to have been unsuccessful in explaining it to the decision makers. This means Chinese leaders do not understand the Taiwan Relations Act directs American policy despite the various communiq s signed by American presidents and Chinese leaders. Even one Chinese analyst complained that "many Chinese analysts don't understand the domestic political and bureaucratic motivations" underlying U.S. policy. They see it as a coherent, hostile, anti-China strategy, not a series of ad hoc decisions made in response to competing interests.<sup>20</sup> They may also misinterpret the open debate in the U.S. media as expressions of U.S. government policy, particularly the hostile portion. This misperception could lead China into precipitous action in response to what it sees as hostile U.S. intent. Additionally, Chinese leaders appear not to appreciate the influence of public opinion on American foreign policy.<sup>21</sup>

Possibly the most dangerous Chinese misperception is the oft-stated belief that the United States lacks the political will to fight despite its clear military superiority. This derives from the U.S. interventions in Somalia and Haiti during the 1990's. China's perception is eerily reminiscent of that of some Japanese leaders in 1941, who believed a devastating surprise attack against U.S. forces would destroy the American will to fight without regard to American capacity to ultimately defeat Japan. This is, however, a flawed reading of American history and ignores the war that opened the 1990's, the Persian Gulf War, where the U.S. was prepared to sustain very large casualties to evict Iraq from Kuwait. Richard Halloran comments on this misperception that "a careful reading of U.S. history in the 20th century... shows that Americans will

fight for causes they understand to be vital to their principles or national interest.”<sup>22</sup> Richard Sowbel, who studies the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy at Harvard, agrees the American public is willing to make sacrifices when their leaders make the cost and benefit of a policy clear to them.<sup>23</sup> Should China act on the basis of this misperception, it risks unleashing what some have called the American “crusade mentality.” China also views Taiwan as a “soft” society where people would sooner flee overseas than fight to defend their island.<sup>24</sup>

This misperception means China views the American will to fight as our weakest link. So it will threaten casualties in an effort to break that will early in any confrontation. One scenario would combine threats of massive casualties with exemplary demonstrations on a third party of the PRC’s ability and willingness to inflict such casualties. The most powerful threat would be one that placed the continental U.S. at risk.

A serious American misunderstanding of China involves the matter of “face.” The U.S. doesn’t appreciate the impact of its behavior on China’s sense of public honor. Given the great disparity between the two nations’ military power, this can be a serious matter. In 1996, the U.S. was very slow in appreciating that the Chinese missile tests and coastal war games required some reaction from the United States. When that reaction came, it signaled clearly and overpoweringly that the U.S. still was supreme in Asian waters. One well-publicized deployment of a carrier battle group and a firm public diplomatic warning would have sufficed. Two carrier battle groups was overkill – and a public humiliation administered to the PRC leadership. Chinese military leaders have vowed this will never happen again. Next time, they intend to have destroyers and naval cruise missiles in place to sink one of the carriers.

Another problem lies in the different ways the U.S. and China perceive their own and the other’s actions. For example, the U.S. tends to separate the military and political in such a way that it often ignores the political implications of its military actions. China, however, sees political implications behind every military decision (even when none is intended).<sup>25</sup> In part, this may result from the different relationship that exists between civilians and the military in American and Chinese society. Where the U.S. mandates a clear separation and subordination of the military to the civilian, China has emphasized a close inter-relationship between the two.<sup>26</sup>

Chinese have described the most dangerous American misperception as our failure to understand the seriousness of their intent to regain Taiwan. This leads the United States to interpret Chinese warnings as “mere rhetoric,” to conclude China is bluffing, and to underestimate the price China is willing to pay to achieve its aim. It also leads American policy makers to conclude that because China has no reasonable hope of victory, it would not use force against Taiwan because “people don’t start wars they expect to lose.” Chinese leaders re-

spond that, quite to the contrary, Taiwan is such a serious matter of regime legitimacy that any government would sooner fight a war it knows it would lose than allow Taiwan to go its own way unchallenged.<sup>27</sup> Chinese have stated repeatedly that no cost is too great if the issue is political control of Taiwan. In January 2001, a People's Liberation Army (PLA) senior colonel told a group of visiting American academics that China is willing to suffer a 20 or 30-year setback to its economy in order to gain control of Taiwan.<sup>28</sup> The flip side of this American misperception is China's failure to recognize that the U.S. may have interests related to Taiwan no less vital than China's.

A crucial difference seems to lie in how the U.S. and China understand victory. For the U.S., victory is measured in military terms. For China, the political and psychological (and moral) are at least as important. This is one of the lessons the U.S. should have learned during the Vietnam War.

China, with its fundamentally *realpolitik* approach to international relations, does not understand that American foreign policy is an often inconsistent blend of realism, idealism, naïveté, and ad hoc solutions. Instead, they see American behavior as carefully thought out, devious, and always directed toward some strategic interest. For this reason, it was incomprehensible to them that the U.S. could have bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade by accident. Likewise, U.S. humanitarian intervention in Somalia and Haiti must have some motive beyond helping the sick and starving. China has described NATO intervention in Kosovo, with NATO always described as "U.S.-led," as a warm up for intervention in China's domestic affairs. "The US bombing of Kosovo was upsetting to the Chinese from the beginning because it indicated that the United States was willing to bomb another country for the way it was treating its own people.... The Chinese worried that the action signaled that no underlying principle would prevent Americans from bombing China because of the way it was treating Taiwan or Tibet."<sup>29</sup> The second aspect of China's *realpolitik* approach is its belief that the costs to the U.S. of challenging China in regard to Taiwan are so much greater than any possible gain to make such a challenge worthwhile.<sup>30</sup>

China's fixation on a Japanese threat is the one great exception to its realist approach. China has an exaggerated picture of Japanese interest and involvement in the Taiwan area and invariably interprets Japanese actions alone and in conjunction with the United States as threats to Chinese interests and sovereignty. At the same time, it is unable to understand how Japan can interpret threatening Chinese behavior negatively. This reflects a pattern where China's focus on bilateral relations prevents it from seeing how its actions appear to other nations. The 1996 missile firings in the vicinity of Taiwan's ports are an example of this. China was shocked

that countries around the world reacted unfavorably to Chinese coercive diplomacy. It had expected other countries would ignore its effort to punish Taiwan.<sup>31</sup>

Closely associated with this is what Johnston calls Chinese leaders' failure to understand the security dilemma – “where a defensive action taken by one status quo actor is interpreted as threatening by another; the second actor then takes what it believes are defensive counteractions that, in turn, are interpreted by the first actor.”<sup>32</sup> Although the PRC is not normally considered a status quo actor,<sup>33</sup> Johnston's point still applies to misperceptions about weaponry by all parties involved in the Taiwan problem, but especially the Chinese, who do not understand the unintended impact of their military actions on other parties and are prone to misinterpret those parties' responses. This was clear in 1997, when Chinese leaders professed shock at Japan's willingness to establish new security guidelines with the United States (which appear to have been a direct consequence of China's actions) and described them as part of a new U.S.-Japan conspiracy to prevent Chinese control of Taiwan.

A final misperception is China's failure to understand the history and perceptions of those living on Taiwan. Few Taiwanese have the World War II experience of Mainland Chinese or share their perception of Japan. In fact, many older Taiwanese speak Japanese and have a favorable view of Japan from their colonial experience. Because of the limited extent of cross-Strait dialogue, PRC leaders are predisposed to view apparently innocuous actions and statements by Taiwan's leaders as covert moves toward independence. The result has been a Chinese loss of patience, setting of time and behavioral limits, and coercive actions. For almost 40 years, the PRC had been able to deal with its Kuomintang adversaries over the heads of the people of Taiwan. This is no longer possible; Taiwanese public opinion constrains the options of the island's leaders, but China does not appear to understand or appreciate this new reality (just as it discounts American public opinion). China now is attempting to work with the opposition parties on Taiwan around the elected leadership and over the heads of the population.

## MISCUES DURING THE 1995-96 TAIWAN STRAIT CRISIS

The 1995-96 crisis in the Taiwan Strait shows how cumulative misperceptions and miscommunication can create and then exacerbate a crisis. The underlying cause of the crisis was the policy of Taiwan President Lee Tung-hui dubbed “vacation diplomacy.” Lee and other Taiwanese leaders informally visited countries they lacked diplomatic relations with in order to present Taiwan's story and gain a public forum. Either ignoring or misunderstanding China's sensitivity about these trips, Lee and the nations involved dismissed Chinese objections. The

last straw for China was when Lee visited Cornell University, his alma mater, and delivered a speech lauding the achievements of democratic Taiwan. The State Department had assured China Lee would not receive a visa, but Congress saw China as trying to intimidate Taiwan and the United States. It passed overwhelmingly a resolution urging Lee be given a visa and threatened stronger action if the administration didn't comply. China responded by staging two series of missile tests in the sea off Taiwan's two main ports during the July and August 1995. This was to show China's displeasure with U.S. actions and teach Taiwan a lesson, said Chinese spokespersons. The U.S. and other major states showed little response although the test areas were less than 100 miles from the ports.

Both Taiwan and the U.S. failed to understand China's sensitivity about its sovereignty claims over Taiwan. China viewed "vacation diplomacy" as an attempt to gain international standing and act as an independent nation. China's anger at American "duplicity" resulted from its inability to understand how the U.S. government works, especially the relationship between the executive and legislature. U.S. failure to respond vigorously to China's missile diplomacy sent the message to Beijing that the U.S. wouldn't get involved. That, at least, was how China interpreted American inaction. This would come back to haunt both countries six months later.

With Taiwan's legislative elections scheduled for December 1995, and the first open presidential election the following March, China decided to use coercion to discourage voters from supporting pro-independence parties and candidates. The plan included more amphibious exercises in November followed in March by another series of missile tests and combined arms invasion exercises on a Chinese island similar to Taiwanese-held territory. The missile firings were close enough to Taiwan's major ports to affect ship traffic and cause panic in Taipei's financial markets. This time, the U.S. dispatched two carrier battle groups to the scene to ensure China didn't attack Taiwan. The Chinese were publicly outraged at what they saw as an American overreaction. China was threatening war in order to avoid the need to go to war and expected the U.S. would understand this. They were also publicly humiliated because it was evident to all that they could do nothing about the presence of the carriers. The deployment did bolster Taiwan's confidence in U.S. support.

On Taiwan, advocates of independence were running for the legislature and the presidency. They made clear their support for independence without considering how China would respond to a position that until recently it had been illegal to discuss on Taiwan. China considered coercion to be a matter solely between itself and Taiwan, somewhat like the relationship between the U.S. government and Rhode Island. It misread the Clinton administration's inaction of the previous summer as signaling a lack of interest. China believed the U.S. would un-

derstand the missile tests and invasion exercises posed no immediate threat to Taiwan. It also believed Japan and other regional states would not interpret China's actions as potentially threatening to themselves. The United States waited too long after China announced its exercises to respond. Following the weak response to the first set of exercises, this delay signaled to Beijing American indifference. When the U.S. did finally respond, it overreacted by deploying two carrier battle groups. China probably has learned from this crisis that the U.S. will respond forcefully should China attempt to use overt military force against Taiwan, but if China opts for a less confrontational approach, such as a blockade, the U.S. will be unsure how and when to react.

If China had plans beyond intimidating Taiwan, it certainly got the message not to attempt them. But the American overreaction highlighted China's relative military weakness in contrast to American ability to operate in the area virtually unimpeded. How close the two nations came to war is debatable, but it is clear that, while the crisis is over, the consequences are not. A series of basic misperceptions, and the actions and communications based on them, led to a crisis that could have ended in war. Clearing away the misperceptions and miscommunications is no guarantee the crisis would not have occurred, but it makes the possibility of crisis less likely and less serious.

Andrew Scobell warns that PRC behavior during the crisis offers four reasons for concern. It reminds us that China is serious about using force to gain control of Taiwan should that become necessary. It warns that China finds the possibility of a preemptive strike against Taiwan attractive.<sup>34</sup> It shows China's preference for using missiles against Taiwan, emphasizing China's development of these weapons and Taiwan's impotence against them. It also demonstrated a "dangerous lack of clear communications" between the U.S. and China. Although each thought the signals it sent were clear, the other side misinterpreted them.<sup>35</sup>

## **INTERESTS**

Each of the parties involved – China, Taiwan, the United States, even Japan – has important national interests at stake in the Taiwan Strait conflict. The situation is complicated because not every party recognizes the validity and intensity of the others' interests. China has stated its interests in terms of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the respect due a major state. In a White Paper issued just before Taiwan's March 2000 presidential election, the PRC listed a number of basic interests including: desire for settlement of the Taiwan issue and reunification of China, affirmation Taiwan is an inalienable part of China, resolution of the Tai-

wan issue is an internal Chinese affair, desire for peaceful reunification, use of force is a last resort, no one must attempt to change Taiwan's status by referendum, and the U.S. must deal with China and Taiwan on the basis of the Three Communiqués of 1972, 1979, and 1982.<sup>36</sup> China has unacknowledged interests that are no less important than the acknowledged ones. Chinese leaders fear that if they permit Taiwan to become independent, this will provide an incentive for separatist groups in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Mongolia. Taiwan also threatens the Chinese Communist regime because it offers a successful political and economic alternative to the mainland in a Chinese cultural setting. To achieve what it views as its proper role as the paramount state in Asia, China needs to remove American power and presence from the region. It sees regaining Taiwan as essential to achieving this. China has recently backtracked on its contention that U.S. power is waning, but continues to believe the U.S. is a state in a long-term decline. While China talks about the importance of a multipolar world, it appears to see itself as the preeminent state in that world, certainly as the preeminent Asian power. China is more like the "Middle Kingdom" of Chinese history than a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist state.

Taiwan's interests seem obvious, but because of the response their open expression would receive from the PRC, they remain muted. Very few residents of Taiwan can remember a time when the island was linked politically to the mainland (1945-49), and few have familial links to the mainland. So Taiwan has no real incentive to unite with the mainland. Taiwan's goal is freedom to continue its development as a democratic society and economically successful state. Anything China might interpret as a move toward independence would jeopardize everything Taiwan has gained because of the likelihood of war, but union would inhibit Taiwan's development even though it would bring peace to the island. Taiwan desires a degree of international recognition and membership in international organizations commensurate with its democracy and economic power, but China opposes both. Taiwan faces a conflict between its interest in promoting its status and its survival interest. Taiwan has the greatest stake in maintaining the status quo, but its slow drift away from China presents the greatest threat to that status quo.

The United States, consistent with its policy of strategic ambiguity, has been vague about the details of its interests in the PRC-Taiwan situation. The December 2000 National Security Strategy said a key American security objective in the region is "enhancing stability in the Taiwan Strait by maintaining our 'one China' policy, promoting peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues, and encouraging dialogue between Beijing and Taipei."<sup>37</sup> The statement contains an ambiguity because the U.S. and PRC do not understand the term "one China" in the same way. This same document defines vital, important, and humanitarian and other interests. The continued existence of Taiwan's democratic society could be placed in any of the three categories,

depending upon how one interprets each level of interest. Few would describe it as a vital national interest, however, although it might be linked to vital interests. From the strategy, it is not likely Taiwan could be considered a vital U.S. interest, although it probably could be linked to a vital interest. Taiwan's existence as a democratic society is the result of American encouragement, however, so for the U.S. to acquiesce in any solution to the Taiwan Strait situation that ignores or rejects the views of Taiwan's population would appear to be inconsistent with the U.S.' stated goal of promoting democracy.

The National Security Strategy addresses U.S. commitments to other nations and the importance of maintaining the credibility of these commitments only briefly. This credibility is crucial for a successful U.S. foreign policy. As displeased as they are by it, PRC leaders appear to believe the U.S. is committed to Taiwan's security such that a PRC attack on Taiwan would result in American military intervention. American failure to act would cause allies in the region who have treaty commitments with the U.S. to reconsider the worth of those treaties.

Soon after passage of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), Senator Jacob Javits explained his understanding of how the TRA affects American interests and commitments to Taiwan: "I was particularly concerned with other dangers which in fact seemed more realistic than an outright invasion from across the straits. The language finally adopted in the House-Senate Conference, therefore, referred to U.S. concern for activities which jeopardized not only the security, but also 'the social and economic system, of the people on Taiwan.'"<sup>38</sup> Similarly, Ralph Clough describes Taiwan as an important economic partner that "has been linked to the United States for many years by a diverse and growing web of interrelationships."<sup>39</sup>

The United States has at least three basic types of interest in how the Taiwan Strait situation is resolved. The United States has been a Pacific power for more than a century. For it to allow some other state to become dominant in the East Asia-Pacific region is contrary not only to current U.S. policy, but also to American grand strategy since the late 1800's.<sup>40</sup> The United States has security commitments to several key East Asian and Pacific states. It has had a legal, and many would argue moral, obligation to assist Taiwan in defending itself against forcible assimilation by the PRC. Regional states view the U.S.-Taiwan relationship as a significant commitment; the consequences of U.S. failure to support Taiwan would more far reaching than the defeat of South Vietnam in 1975.<sup>41</sup> This could mean American allies in the region would rethink their relationship with the result that the U.S. would be marginalized in the region.

It is unclear that the U.S. would find acceptable even a peaceful assimilation of Taiwan to the PRC. This would provide China with the technology the U.S. has given Taiwan and that Taiwan has developed itself and project PRC military power eastward into the Pacific with naval

and air bases on Taiwan. The U.S. also has a longstanding “soft” interest in encouraging and supporting the spread of democratic societies and to ignore American idealism is not to be realistic.<sup>42</sup> Taiwan is an example of democratic transformation as the PRC is not. Abandonment of Taiwan would contradict values enshrined in America’s founding documents. The U.S. has a stated interest in the peaceful settlement of the conflict between Taiwan and the PRC, but this may not be reconcilable with other U.S. interests. The bottom line may be domestic: “Any US President hoping for a second term cannot stand by and let China seize Taiwan.”<sup>43</sup>

Japan also has interests in the situation. It wants to retain its relationship with the U.S. without antagonizing China. Any obligation to provide basing or logistical support for U.S. assistance to Taiwan could result in military retaliation and certainly in economic retaliation. Refusal to assist the U.S., however, could be the end of the mutual security relationship. Japan also has an interest in China not becoming so powerful that it could threaten Japanese security. This includes potential control over the sea lanes that are vital to the Japanese economy. Balancing these interests will require Japan to walk a fine line.

There is a clear conflict among the interests of the parties involved. The danger inherent in this is that the parties don’t fully recognize or acknowledge the interests of the others. China does not believe U.S. interests relating to Taiwan are sufficient to justify it in going to war. The U.S. is skeptical about China’s territorial claim, may not fully appreciate its regime survival concern, and probably has concerns about how resolution of the Taiwan situation would affect China as a rising power.

## CAPABILITIES

Most studies of the Taiwan Strait situation focus on the relative military capabilities of the PRC and Taiwan (and sometimes the U.S.). This is a necessary task because intentions and capabilities are related, but by itself it is misleading. The relationship between capabilities and intentions is mutual, with each influencing the other, but neither is the sole influence on the other. And different viewers evaluate capabilities differently, so what we see as capabilities do not necessarily limit our adversary’s intentions. In the Taiwan Strait case, this comparison usually leads to the evaluation of a conventional military confrontation. This is particularly true with respect to the PRC. But, as the U.S. learned to its chagrin in Vietnam, military capability is not always the key factor for engaging in or winning a war.

The PRC has stated its desire to complete the national reunification that would signal the end of China’s civil war. China would prefer to settle the Taiwan conflict by negotiation, but fail-

ing that is willing to resort to force to gain its end. But Chinese leaders have said repeatedly that they would go to war rather than allow China to be permanently divided. That they might not win such a war does not preclude their use of force.<sup>44</sup> For domestic reasons, China appears willing to use force even when defeat is certain. Most western analysts find this incomprehensible, but they shouldn't. They conclude such a course of action is irrational, so China wouldn't follow it. In doing this, they impose their sense of rationality on the Chinese leadership, which has its own reasons for reaching a different conclusion. There are several recent precedents for this "irrational" course of action. In 1941, Japan initiated a war against the U.S. that it doubted it could win because every other option seemed worse than war. Japan's leaders had concluded the nation's survival was at stake.<sup>45</sup> In 1973, the Arab states attacked Israel although they realized Israel was militarily more powerful than they were. They understood a military defeat could still be a political victory. China's perspective appears little different.

China intends to claim what it sees as its proper place in the region and the world. It has not explained what this would mean for China, other regional states, or the international community. It would appear to require that China both exercise sovereignty over Taiwan and seriously weaken or remove altogether American influence in the East Asia-Pacific region.

The difficulty in planning for a Taiwan Strait crisis lies in the measure of disagreement among U.S. analysts about China's capabilities, intentions, and goals. Key areas of disagreement include the PRC's ultimate regional and international goals and where Taiwan fits into them, whether the PRC and the U.S. are on an inevitable collision course in East Asia, whether the PRC will be subtle or heavy-handed in its dealings with Taiwan, how much the PRC is willing to pay to gain control of Taiwan, and the PRC's willingness to use nuclear weapons to achieve its goals.

Comparisons of the military capability of the PRC and Taiwan usually begin with the major weapons systems each side has on hand or expects to receive from an arms supplier. They also discuss topics the parties mention in their doctrine or public statements (e.g., information warfare, special operations). Only occasionally do the comparisons probe behind the numbers to ask if the military has integrated the various weapons systems into its force, if there are sufficient trained personnel to maintain, operate, and support the systems, if all the various systems can be employed in the Taiwan area, and what other threats or responsibilities the military must be prepared to handle.<sup>46</sup> Questions about the ability of the military to engage in joint operations and concerns about command and control reflect unfavorably upon the military capability of both the PRC and Taiwan. The 2000 Department of Defense report to Congress on Taiwan and the PRC listed significant U.S. intelligence gaps regarding logistics, maintenance, and training of

both PRC and Taiwan militaries.<sup>47</sup> Far more important than how these militaries function on a regular basis in peacetime is their capability to increase their tempo in a combat environment and maintain that operational tempo for the duration of a war.

Not only does capability affect intentions, but intentions influence capability. For example, analysts who look at the structure of the PRC military, Taiwan's west coast geography, and the likely air superiority over the Strait of Taiwan's air force conclude an invasion of Taiwan would be unsuccessful. It is likely that PRC leaders have reached the same conclusion and decided to develop their military accordingly. Thus, having decided not to pursue the cross-Strait amphibious invasion option, the PRC is not investing heavily in amphibious assault craft or other weapons needed to accomplish this option. Instead, they have chosen to concentrate resources on weapons that will permit them to intimidate Taiwan and deter U.S. intervention. This is a case where intentions help determine capability. Nonetheless, a pessimistic 1999 Department of Defense report concluded, "The PLA likely would encounter great difficulty conducting such a sophisticated campaign [joint amphibious assault of Taiwan] by 2005. Nevertheless, the campaign likely would succeed – barring third party intervention – if Beijing were willing to accept the almost certain political, economic, diplomatic, and military costs that such a course of action would produce."<sup>48</sup> Other analysts think the PRC could overcome Taiwan through a war of attrition without an invasion, but believe the PRC considers the cost far too high unless unification becomes a matter of desperation.<sup>49</sup>

The different cultures involved in the Taiwan Strait conflict make more difficult an accurate assessment of military capabilities because they have different attitudes toward public disclosure. American capabilities, apart from classified details of various weapons systems, are widely available in open source materials, as is the U.S. order of battle. As the sole remaining superpower, the U.S. is able to project military power to most regions of the world. The three main military areas of concern are how other potential conflicts would affect U.S. deployment in the event of military confrontation in the Taiwan Strait; the amount of support U.S. allies, especially Japan, would provide, and the size, configuration; and armament of U.S. forces 10 or 20 years from now. As Mark Stokes writes, the U.S. tries to deter opponents by letting them know how powerful it is.<sup>50</sup> In contrast, the PRC attempts to deter potential adversaries by denying them knowledge of its military organization, doctrine, plans, and capabilities. This attitude toward information has long been a part of Chinese strategic culture. As to its effect on U.S. decision making, Jason Ellis says, "Significant information gaps have intensified the effects of Chinese deception, internal debate, and lack of transparency, which have further hampered the

U.S. ability to discern the nature, purpose, and likely extent of Chinese plans in this area and to craft an appropriate policy response.<sup>51</sup>

It is one thing to have modern weapons. It is something quite different to be able to maintain these weapons and use them to their full potential. It is even more difficult to employ these weapons in a combined arms scenario where communications and coordination are essential. It is doubtful that the PRC has sufficient training or experience to mount combined operations. The Secretary of Defense's June 2000 report to Congress on China's military said, "While Beijing understands the theoretical aspects of integrating various weapons systems and strike assets, the PLA's principal obstacles lie in doctrinal and tactical deficiencies.... So-called joint exercises appear to be highly scripted, with little or no free play.... China is not expected to develop comprehensive joint power projection capabilities for at least the next two decades; as a result, its ability to control a multidimensional battlespace likely will remain limited."<sup>52</sup>

An additional difficulty regarding the PRC is that although the U.S. has a reasonable idea of where it intends to focus its weapons development and acquisition, it is far from clear whether the PRC can move from development to production, integrate its various systems into a coherent warfighting force, implement its doctrine for joint operations, and sustain its forces in a combat environment. American analysts have a far better idea of Taiwan's general capabilities because PRC pressure has made the U.S. into Taiwan's only major source of arms. Chinese pressure also means the U.S. no longer has the close military relationship with Taiwan that would enable it to evaluate Taiwan's military readiness, maintenance, command and control, and weapons survivability. The quality and quantity of Taiwan's domestic arms production is likewise unclear.

China's capabilities lie primarily in the future. The consensus is that the conventional military balance is shifting slowly in the PRC's favor. In addition, China is working on an Information Warfare (IW) capability to attack Taiwanese, Japanese, and American command and control centers, financial markets, and the many other key electronic facilities so essential to the functioning of modern society. The PRC is suspected of testing its IW capability against U.S. government computer networks.<sup>53</sup> Assessing China's efforts toward employing asymmetrical warfare against Taiwan, Stokes says, "Emphasis on preemptive, long-range precision strikes, information dominance, command and control warfare, and integrated air defense could enable the PLA to defang Taiwan's ability to conduct military operations."<sup>54</sup> Carefully targeted, such an approach could seriously degrade U.S. capability for military action in the region.

China cannot mount a conventional invasion of Taiwan. It lacks sufficient sealift capacity and would be unlikely to gain air superiority over the Taiwan Strait in less than a month. The

western coast of Taiwan is notoriously unsuited to amphibious operations, consisting primarily of broad mud flats. The PRC has shown no intention of improving its amphibious capability, but it is making major improvements in its air force, naval combatants, and missile forces. During the past five years, China has focused its development and acquisition programs on weapons whose greatest utility would be against Taiwan. The PRC recognizes it is unlikely to improve its conventional military forces to the point where it could successfully invade Taiwan in the face of U.S. intervention in the near to mid-term. Thus, it is building on its strengths by improving the quality and accuracy of its ballistic and cruise missiles, exploring the potential of information warfare, and trying to develop other unconventional capabilities that can take advantage of what it sees as U.S. and Taiwan weaknesses.

China has a large inventory of ballistic missiles that can quickly reach neighboring states and a few primitive liquid-fuel missiles that can deliver nuclear weapons to the continental United States. More than once, Chinese officers have threatened to use nuclear weapons against American cities if the U.S. intervenes to defend Taiwan. It remains unclear whether this was more than a bluff. In any case, China's current ICBM force is susceptible to destruction before it could be readied for launch. With the solid fuel and mobile ICBMs under development, however, the PRC is attempting to move from a minimal deterrent to a second strike capability.

While Chinese ballistic missiles are limited in their accuracy, their number is sufficient to attack and damage all of Taiwan's major airfields, ports, and key infrastructure with the probability of degrading Taiwan's ability to launch its fighter aircraft and coordinate its air defense. China's goal is to develop within the decade guidance systems that will improve the accuracy of its ballistic missiles to 10 meters. If they are successful, this will create a threat to U.S. Navy ships deployed to the east side of Taiwan and will seriously affect Taiwan's ability to defend itself. The PRC is also working on accurate cruise missiles with an over-the-horizon capability that could fly under current and projected missile defense systems. As part of its recent purchase of two destroyers from Russia, the PRC is receiving SS-N-22 SUNBURN anti-ship cruise missiles, which the U.S. Navy is said to be unable to defend against.

China was shocked and impressed by U.S. technological warfare in the Persian Gulf and Kosovo. It decided it needed to develop at least some of these capabilities for its own military. As a result, China has shown great interest in the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) that has become such a popular discussion topic in Western military circles. The same technological prowess that the Chinese want for themselves they also believe they can turn against the United States. Because the U.S. military has built information technology into every aspect of warfighting, interference with that technology would have devastating consequences on Ameri-

can ability to use its military. Chinese military leaders believe if they focus their efforts on disabling these high-tech systems, they can keep the U.S. out of the fight or defeat it when it engages. Interestingly, China considers the U.S. vulnerable to RMA developments because of this dependence on technology yet believes the PRC can exploit technology to deter or defeat the U.S. in a regional conflict without exposing itself to the same vulnerability. The PRC seems to understand the RMA in an instrumental sense without clearly understanding the organizational elements required and have a naïve expectation the RMA can quickly and inexpensively transform China's offensive military capability and enable a weaker nation to defeat a stronger one.

Chinese military authors have written extensively on the potential role of Information Warfare (IW) in enabling a country like China to bypass several generations of technology to defeat a more powerful and advanced adversary. PLA leaders believe many aspects of IW can be found in embryonic form in the Chinese military classics. Drawing on these for inspiration, China is likely to develop innovative IW strategies that will look very different from American IW programs.<sup>55</sup> To the extent they are different and the U.S. fails to recognize the differences, they will be difficult for U.S. forces to counter.

The United States has the most powerful military in the world. This is not the same, however, as being able to deploy that power in support of Taiwan. As a world power, the U.S. must be prepared to deploy forces to many places around the world at the same time, limiting its effort in any one, whereas China as a regional power can focus its efforts in its immediate vicinity. For future Taiwan crises, the U.S. is likely to need to deploy more than carrier battle groups. American ability to support Taiwan militarily will depend on the magnitude of the crisis, whether other international situations require a U.S. presence, the willingness of allies, especially Japan, to allow the U.S. to use bases on their territory and even to provide some direct assistance, American public support, and nature of Chinese deterrence. The answers to these questions cannot be known until a crisis occurs. A 2000 symposium at the U.S. National Defense University concluded regional states do not want the U.S. to ask them to help in the event of a conflict in the Taiwan Strait, nevertheless, they expect the U.S. to intervene in support of Taiwan should it become necessary.<sup>56</sup> The most important factor for America's regional allies will be how China threatens to respond.

American support to Taiwan can range from political and diplomatic intervention, through provision of replacement and supplementary weapons systems and intelligence, to some form of direct military involvement with naval and air forces. The U.S. stationed one carrier battle

group in the region and has land-based aircraft in Japan. For anti-submarine warfare and mine-sweeping, the U.S. might need to call for Japanese assistance if the political climate permits.

Taiwan can defend itself against direct attack by PRC conventional air, land, and surface naval forces, and will continue to be able to for much of this decade. Taiwan's anti-submarine warfare capability is limited as is its submarine force. It cannot defend itself against ballistic or cruise missile attack and likely would face difficulty in responding to a concerted special operations attack. Taiwan has virtually no self-defense capability against a preemptive attack of the sort China has been talking about.<sup>57</sup> It could defeat many of the individual parts, apart from ballistic missiles, but if the PRC were able to coordinate a multifaceted surprise attack, Taiwan could not protect itself. Taiwan's ability to defend against IW operations is unknown, but many aspects of its IW capability are at least equal to those of the PRC. The Taiwan military needs to refocus its emphasis away from ground forces toward air and naval forces. The battle will be at least half lost if the PLA gains a foothold on Taiwan itself. Historically, the army has been the most powerful element of Taiwan's armed forces and it remains skeptical the air force and navy can prevent a successful PRC invasion. Therefore, it wants weapons such as tanks to be able to defeat the PLA on the beach. Anti-submarine ships and helicopters have not been high on Taiwan's list of desired purchases and it has been unable to find anyone willing to sell it modern submarines. China has effectively used the threat of economic retaliation to deter countries other than the U.S. from selling weapons to Taiwan.

As important as acquiring new weapons are assistance in integrating the systems Taiwan's armed forces already have, improved pilot and crew training, hardened airfield facilities, improved air defense command and control, and better interoperability with U.S. forces.<sup>58</sup> This type of military spending is less glamorous than some of the new weapons systems Taiwan would like, but it is at least as essential to a successful defense of the island.

Because it cannot defend against the increasing number of ballistic missiles deployed across the strait, Taiwan faces the possibility it will no longer be able to maintain the air superiority over the Taiwan Strait needed to defeat any PRC invasion attempt.<sup>59</sup> This risk would appear, however, to depend on China attaining sufficient precision with its missiles that it can render runways at least temporarily inoperable, slowing the Taiwan air force's sortie rate, decreasing the number of defensive aircraft that can be in the air at any one time, and destroying AWACS aircraft on the ground.

With its modern, technological economy and educated population, Taiwan's capacity for Information Warfare is at least as great as the PRC's.<sup>60</sup> This includes developing both defensive measures to protect against PRC IW attacks and offensive means that would target PRC

military and civilian systems and the computers that support them. Because it is more technologically advanced, Taiwan is more vulnerable to IW, but it also has a stronger base from which to develop its own defensive and offensive programs. The same asymmetry argument the PRC makes regarding smaller and weaker status in relation to the U.S. applies to Taiwan and the PRC. A smaller, weaker Taiwan can focus its strengths against a larger, stronger PRC's weaknesses.

A disquieting note is that Taiwan's technological capability also includes the know how to develop nuclear weapons and delivery systems. It put its nuclear program on hold more than 30 years ago because of strong U.S. pressure. China has threatened that Taiwan's development of nuclear weapons now would constitute grounds for war. Stokes notes, however, that if Taiwan should lose the sense of security it enjoys with the universal presumption of U.S. intervention, it might try again to develop nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. Stokes adds that, absent a viable defense against Chinese missiles in Fujian province, Taiwan may plan for counterforce operations such as preemptive strikes.<sup>61</sup>

## **INTENTIONS**

The only party that has made its intentions clear is the PRC. It seeks the political integration of Taiwan with Mainland China, and is willing to use force if necessary to achieve this goal. In various white papers and public pronouncements, the PRC has stated conditions that would cause it to use force against Taiwan and nations aiding Taiwan and drawn a firm line on acceptable international and domestic behavior by Taiwan. Taiwan has refused to accept PRC conditions for continued discussion of its status, but has carefully avoided any public statements hinting at *formal* independence. The United States has followed a policy of deliberate strategic ambiguity since 1954. Especially since 1979, the U.S. has sought to leave unclear to both Taiwan and the PRC its willingness to intervene in cross-strait conflict, saying only that it expected a mutually agreeable, peaceful resolution of the difference between Taiwan and the PRC. It is likely that at least some portion of this strategy of ambiguity results from U.S. uncertainty about the action it would take in various contingencies. Japan is the fourth actor whose intentions must be considered. Despite PRC complaints, it is unclear how much support Japan would provide for U.S. military assistance to Taiwan. The preference of all four parties involved appears to be a continuation of the status quo, but this may not be a viable option.

The PRC asserts Taiwan is and always has been part of China. As the October 2000, PRC Defense White Paper says, "Settlement of the Taiwan issue and realization of the com-

plete reunification of China embodies the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation.... Settlement of the Taiwan issue is entirely an internal affair of China."<sup>62</sup> Taiwan has become a matter of national sovereignty and national honor. Separatist tendencies in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Inner Mongolia also make incorporation of Taiwan a matter of regime survival for Chinese leaders. They view Taiwanese separatism as an encouragement to minority separatist groups on the mainland. For the current generation of Chinese leaders, who are not part of the revolutionary generations of Mao and Deng and lack their legitimacy, the final unification of China that began with Hong Kong and Macao must include Taiwan. The PRC describes gaining political control over Taiwan as a matter of vital national interest. It is not clear that the U.S. recognizes the emotional and nationalist depth of Beijing's interest in Taiwan or the widespread support of the Chinese public for unification.

Because China considers Taiwan a "renegade province," it views U.S. support of Taiwan since 1950 as interference in its domestic affairs. China does not consider its dealings with Taiwan to be a matter of concern to other nations. Thus, the PRC reserves the right to treat Taiwan the same way it does the mainland provinces. To Americans, what China considers quelling domestic disturbance or concluding a civil war would appear as aggression and evidence of PRC belligerence. As a firm supporter of the Westphalian view of national sovereignty, the PRC has opposed international interventions in what it considers domestic matters (such as Kosovo). The primary reason for this position is its fear that a similar argument could be used to justify intervention by other nations in such Chinese domestic concerns as Taiwan, Tibet, or Xinjiang or government suppression of "dissident" groups such as the Falun Gong.

Traditionally, China has been seen as a nation that prefers to settle disputes peacefully. This is called the Confucian-Mencian strategic culture. Based on his reading of new evidence, Johnston has challenged this interpretation. He says China's dispute behavior in some cases has been "higher risk, more militarized, and less connected to specific limited political demands than was once believed." He suggests China will be "more likely to resort to force – and relatively high levels of force – when disputes involve territory and occur in periods when the perceived gap between desired and ascribed status is growing or large."<sup>63</sup> Taiwan is such a situation and China believes this is such a time.

Considering Taiwan legally part of "one China," the PRC views the U.S. sale of weapons to Taiwan, official and unofficial visits between U.S. and Taiwan government officials, congressional resolutions supporting Taiwan, and possible inclusion of Taiwan in an East Asian regional missile defense system as interference in domestic Chinese affairs. The Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (TSEA), arising from congressional concern about Clinton administration policy

toward Taiwan and China and including Taiwan in a regional missile defense program are particularly provocative. Because current U.S. law offers adequate support for Taiwan and the proposed Theater Missile Defense (TMD) could protect Taiwan against neither the current PRC ballistic missile threat nor future land-attack cruise missiles, both measures would be needlessly provocative. A threat to deploy TMD in the Taiwan area might be useful as a bargaining chip to cause China to decrease its ballistic missile force across the strait from Taiwan, but it offers little military value.

Many Chinese leaders believe Americans view a rising China as a threat to the United States that must be countered with political, economic, and military measures. This view affects their perception of U.S. actions with regard to Taiwan, other regional states, and deployment of any missile defense system. While China views including Taiwan in any missile defense as a political statement because it would require some U.S.-Taiwan military cooperation, it sees the existence of any form of missile defense as intended to intimidate what it considers legitimate Chinese action in the region and deny it a credible nuclear deterrent. Unless American leaders can convince China this is not the case, plans to deploy a missile defense will encourage China to speed its development and deployment of an ICBM force that will have a quick response time and be difficult to detect and destroy. This could enhance China's ability to deter future American intervention in support of Taiwan.

Taiwan can probably defend itself against PRC attack today and for at least the next five years. It may be able to do so without U.S. assistance for as long as a month. Taiwan almost certainly can repel an invasion and maintain air superiority over the Taiwan Strait and Taiwan. Its ability to control the sea east of Taiwan is doubtful because it lacks a blue water navy, and it lacks the proper equipment to defend against PRC submarines or sweep mines from its ports and their sea approaches. Without air superiority over the strait, however, the PRC could not achieve surface naval superiority either.

Since martial law ended in 1987, Taiwan has been moving rapidly toward full democracy, even to the point where the opposition party won the presidency in 2000. This has been accompanied by rapid economic growth that has improved the Taiwanese standard of living far beyond that of Mainland Chinese. As the relationship between the PRC and Taiwan improved during the 1990's, many Taiwanese visited the mainland. The result has been a decreased interest in incorporation into the PRC. They are willing to construct factories and do business on the mainland, but they don't want to become part of it. Replacement of the Nationalists who fled the mainland in 1949 by native-born Taiwanese makes it far less likely the PRC will be able to

cut a deal over the heads of the island's residents, who show little support for the PRC's "one China" claim.

## **CRISIS DETERRENCE AND COERCIVE DIPLOMACY**

Deterrence theory is a major part of western international relations theory. There is some question, however, about its application to non-western and cross-cultural settings. Apart from the Taiwan Strait, the United States has had limited success in deterring Asian adversaries. While we hope that with a proper understanding of ourselves and our adversary and an openness to solving our disagreements we can achieve either a peaceful resolution or successful deterrence, this is not always the case.<sup>64</sup>

Deterrence theory presumes our adversary is rational, reasonable, and generally predictable. It also presumes each side knows its own and the other side's interests. Only if we know our interests do we know what we are trying to deter, and only if we know the other side's interests do we know what deterrence is likely to cost. The problem is that adversaries frequently misunderstand one another and act in ways the other considers irrational, making it hard for us to know our adversary. What we often miss in all this is that our standard of rationality does not necessarily apply to our adversary's situation, especially in the interplay between domestic and international concerns.<sup>65</sup> The adversary we call irrational might only be "crazy like a fox." When the adversary has a different culture and history, the gap only increases unless each party makes a serious effort to understand the other.

According to classic deterrence theory, successful deterrence of an adversary requires threatening to exact a cost greater than any potential gain the adversary might achieve or removing a benefit the adversary currently enjoys.<sup>66</sup> It can also mean reducing the expected benefit the adversary hopes to gain,<sup>67</sup> a course of action too rarely considered. Thus, successful deterrence requires knowing how the adversary measures the value of gains and losses. It also means convincing that adversary the deterrent threat is credible. That threat should be relevant to the subject of the dispute, and should be proportional to the value of the gain sought.<sup>68</sup> The deterrent threat must be both understandable and believable to the adversary.

In 1950, China's threat to intervene militarily in North Korea was unconvincing to U.S. leaders for several reasons. According to Allen Whiting, the Indian ambassador chosen to deliver the message had a reputation for being unusually sympathetic to the PRC, the U.S. believed China was incapable of intervention to the extent required for success, and Chinese intervention in the face of overwhelming U.S. power appeared irrational.<sup>69</sup> All three American

perceptions were wrong from a Chinese perspective. In making its threat, China failed take into account the difference between U.S. and Chinese perspectives. The result was a deterrence failure and nearly three years of war. American efforts to deter Chinese intervention were equally unsuccessful. Neither side understood the values that motivated the other, but thought it did. For the newly established PRC, intervention was a regime survival issue of paramount importance; nothing the U.S. said or did would convince the PRC that the United Nations attempt to occupy North Korea and reunify the Korean peninsula was not directed against the PRC.

The problem is not that the U.S. and China have different cultures, but that the leaders of both nations have acted as if they do not. Moreover, according to Zhang, deterrents may not have the same meaning in Washington and Beijing.<sup>70</sup> Effective deterrence requires understanding how our adversary's thought processes and preferred way of behaving. This information is both difficult to obtain and, once obtained, to interpret and apply to specific situations.

Not every adversary can be deterred. Sometimes the adversary sees the value to be gained or maintained as greater than any threat we can credibly make. This would be true in the case of national and possibly regime survival. It would also be true if the adversary believes it is possible to evade the conditions of the threat, considers any condition better than the status quo, or cannot evaluate the threat for cultural, domestic, or psychological reasons.<sup>71</sup> Sometimes, potential aggressors do not recognize credible deterrent threats. This is a real danger with regard to Taiwan. The U.S. has not articulated its tangible interests as clearly as has the PRC and its intangible interests do not impress China as commensurate with its own. Further, the formal position the U.S. has expressed with regard to resolution of the Taiwan issue conveys no strategic American interest in the continued existence of a Taiwan independent of Mainland China – it merely says the U.S. expects both sides to settle the conflict peacefully. Rightly or wrongly, this signals a low level of intrinsic interest in the situation.

Even when threats are clearly and deliberately communicated, the opponent may engage in wishful thinking, distort information about the deterrer, or ignore or twist the evidence it has in order to make that evidence fit what it desires. The opponent may be too occupied with domestic concerns to pay sufficient attention to the international environment.<sup>72</sup> In the post-Cold War environment, potential conflicts are likely to involve intrinsic interests for the regional state and non-intrinsic interests for the U.S. This means the credibility of the U.S. commitment will be less believable.<sup>73</sup>

The most effective deterrent appears to be denying potential aggressors the belief they will be able to achieve a quick victory and will be able to maintain control of the situation.<sup>74</sup>

China has stated clearly that if using force becomes necessary, it plans to defeat Taiwan before the United States can intervene effectively. The most effective deterrent threats are issued before one's adversary commits psychologically and physically to act. Even tentative decisions are difficult to reverse.<sup>75</sup>

Getting our adversary's attention may be difficult. States tend to focus on their own domestic political pressures and their strategic and domestic interests rather than on the interests and capabilities of those trying to deter them. The U.S. historically has sought to deter PRC action against Taiwan by deploying carrier battle groups to the area as a show of commitment. Rhoades suggests this ploy is usually unproductive despite American belief to the contrary.<sup>76</sup>

No matter how well thought out and appropriate to the situation, deterrence is always in the eye of the beholder, the adversary we are attempting to deter.<sup>77</sup> This means it is not our perception of the issues involved or relative strength or potential gain or loss, but our adversary's. At least as important as interests and capability is our adversary's perception of relative will: will we actually carry out the threat? When it comes to war over Taiwan, the PRC is skeptical of the depth of American commitment. Put another way, China believes it may be able to deter the U.S. from intervening militarily in support of Taiwan.

Conventional deterrence theory usually operates with the "one size fits all" model. Most theorists developed their ideas during the Cold War confrontation with the Soviet Union. Today, they tend to act as if the theory is universal in its application. We cannot apply Soviet deterrence theory to China without major modifications. Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union found that successful conventional deterrence of China required threatening very high levels of violence.<sup>78</sup> This was not normally the case between the U.S. and USSR during the Cold War. It is unclear that the United States morally and credibly can threaten China with the use of force sufficient to deter it from acting against Taiwan in every case. When China deploys the ICBMs it is now developing, the U.S. is unlikely to be willing to risk a Chinese nuclear response to any action it might take in the case of deterrence failure. Or, as the Chinese general put it, would we sacrifice Los Angeles for Taiwan? Would U.S. leaders be willing to risk finding out if that would be the true cost? By 2010, U.S. policy makers will have to answer such questions. Shulsky notes, "The historical record indicates that China's adversaries often misunderstand its motives and willingness to use force, which affects their ability to deter the Chinese use of force." He says China has been willing to use force because it can use the resulting tension to its own advantage. As long as China can control the tension level and escalation process, it believes the tension helps China and hurts its adversary.<sup>79</sup>

Possibly the greatest obstacle to successful crisis deterrence in the Taiwan Strait is that neither the U.S. nor the PRC sufficiently recognizes that the other side believes it has important national interests at stake. In part, this is because the basic PRC and U.S. interests involved are qualitatively different. China's interests include national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and regime legitimacy. It is also a matter of national pride. For the U.S., credibility of commitments and support for democratic governments are more central than traditional security interests, although these are not absent. Because of the consequences regarding Japan, the credibility of U.S. commitments to Asian allies may be more important to the PRC than its leaders realize. U.S. leaders have not clearly and convincingly articulated American interest in the resolution of Taiwan's status and doubt China is as committed as it claims to be.

If U.S. analysts and policymakers attempt to predict PRC actions using conventional deterrence theory without considering China's national self-image, they will underestimate the cost China is willing to pay to gain Taiwan.<sup>80</sup> This is particularly true because in expressing its concerns and threats China in the past has used bombastic rhetoric that significantly exceeded its capabilities and that adversaries can too easily dismiss.

An additional problem confronting the United States is that Chinese strategic thought emphasizes achieving surprise and inflicting psychological shock on its adversary. This is particularly true when facing a more powerful adversary such as the United States.<sup>81</sup> Should China conclude that resort to force is its only option, a surprise attack would be very difficult to deter. China has suggested such a preemptive attack would include not only Taiwan, but also Japan and American bases in East Asia and the Pacific. It probably would include a combination of asymmetric and conventional attacks.

Closely linked with crisis deterrence in the strait area is coercive diplomacy. This attempts to force a state to reverse an action it has taken and restore the status quo. Because it seeks to make a state undo a successful action instead of trying to convince that state not to attempt an action that may or may not be successful, coercive diplomacy is more difficult than deterrence. Since the early 1990's, however, the PRC has used coercive diplomacy successfully to force Taiwan to rein in its attempts to acquire international space through informal diplomacy, such as Lee Teng-hui's 1995 visit to the U.S. The PRC also has used coercive diplomacy to make the U.S. modify its Taiwan policy and its general policy toward China, including human rights, trade, and technology transfer. Despite the deployment of the two battle carrier groups in March 1996, U.S. actions since that time show PRC coercive diplomacy has been successful.<sup>82</sup> Should Taiwan take formal steps toward independence, the PRC likely would attempt coercive measures before resorting to military force. Should the PRC successfully conquer Taiwan be-

fore the U.S. could intervene militarily, the U.S. would face the prospect of attempting coercive diplomacy before having to decide on a military response. Domestic support for the latter situation is unlikely.

What the U.S. is unable to deter, it may be able to delay. The difference between deterring and delaying is a function of China's willingness to pay the costs of military action. If faced with the choice between formal Taiwanese independence and using force, China will use force. The U.S. cannot make a credible threat serious enough to deter China. But as long as there is a possibility of settling the conflict peacefully, it is less costly for China to delay acting. The likelihood of American intervention, the fear of failure, domestic and international consequences of military action, and belief in an improvement in the relative military balance over time encourage China to delay action against Taiwan. This is more important than it first appears. A long-term delay, measured in decades rather than years, would allow for changes in both China and Taiwan that could lead to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in a way few may even be considering now.

## **OPTIONS**

Crisis deterrence requires the U.S. have an accurate idea of the action or actions it is trying to deter. In the Taiwan Strait situation, it also requires the U.S. to evaluate PRC efforts to deter U.S. intervention. The latter is by far the more difficult task due to the nature of the PRC's deterrent threats to date and the secretiveness of its decision making process. It will become even more difficult as the PRC increases the quality, quantity, and survivability of its strategic nuclear deterrent.

Each party involved in the Taiwan Strait has a range of options. Which option each will or should choose depends on what that party hopes to accomplish. China has a wide range of options, and this creates a problem for U.S. policy makers because they require different forms of deterrence. The cumulative impact of seeking to deter all the various possible Chinese options would be costly in resources and time. Thus, the first task is to evaluate PRC options in terms of likelihood. The key determinants are Chinese capabilities and weaknesses and the risk to China involved in each course of action (China's interest in Taiwan is clear). The less spectacular and blatant courses minimize the risk of international and domestic repercussions and can be attempted more than once. A failed invasion, whatever form it took, would harm the PRC economy, weaken the armed forces, probably delegitimize the Chinese Communist Party

and topple the government, and irrevocably alienate the people of Taiwan from the mainland. That would be a high price to pay for an action with little likelihood of near term success.

The PRC's goal is to prevent Taiwan from becoming an independent nation.<sup>83</sup> China has stated clearly and repeatedly the behaviors by Taiwan and its allies that would provoke a PRC military response. Most American analysts believe China is not bluffing about its readiness to back its claim with force.<sup>84</sup> They are skeptical, however, that China would use nuclear weapons to do so.

No Chinese government in the near term can hope to survive if it allows Taiwan to gain its independence without a fight. Even war with the United States would be a lesser evil. It is equally doubtful the people of Taiwan would agree freely to such a relationship apart from a drastic deterioration in the military balance. With a leadership transition planned in China for 2002, the prospect for at least the coming year is for a less accommodating PRC.<sup>85</sup> Those who would lead China must gain the support of the PLA, and the PLA sees itself responsible for successfully concluding China's civil war, unifying the country, and defending its proper borders. In other words, for the PLA, Taiwan is a non-negotiable issue.

Unfortunately, Taiwan, the U.S., and Japan are less clear about their goals. For the moment, Taiwan's desire to remain separate from Mainland China does not include a plan for formal independence, but that could change. The stated American goal is that the PRC and Taiwan settle their differences peacefully. Not every form of that result would be consistent with American interests, however. The U.S. has goals beyond this, but they remain inchoate. Japan's goal or goals are even more unformed because of constitutional and attitudinal constraints within the country, residual fears on the part of its Asian neighbors, and domestic political and generational differences. Japan's basic desire is that it not be forced to choose between the U.S. and China. Japan is concerned, however, about Chinese aspirations to regional hegemony.<sup>86</sup>

For every party involved, continuation of the status quo would be the best option. Although it is probably not anyone's ideal solution, there does not appear to be any alternative acceptable to all parties. China, however, looks on the growth of democracy on Taiwan, the attendant development of a Taiwanese sense of identity, and the resulting change in political attitudes toward the PRC with concern. It fears the status quo is shifting subtly but steadily in favor of Taiwanese separatism.<sup>87</sup> If so, coercive diplomacy or direct military action will be required to achieve the PRC's goal. Despite China's sovereignty claims, it is likely to prefer options that are least confrontational internationally and least likely to result in U.S. or Japanese

intervention. Shulsky says history suggests any Chinese military action against Taiwan is likely to occur at the lower end of the scale in terms of force.<sup>88</sup>

## CHINA'S OPTIONS

China has two deterrence concerns. It is seeking to prevent Taiwan from taking steps toward formal independence and from deploying weapons that would make PRC actions against Taiwan more difficult or most costly. China also seeks to deter the U.S. from providing encouragement and military support, such as advanced weapons sales, to Taiwan and from intervening militarily in support of Taiwan should a crisis in the strait lead to military conflict. In both cases, China has shown little reluctance to replace failed deterrence with coercive actions directed at both Taiwan and the United States.

Economic relations between the PRC and Taiwan have been increasing rapidly for over a decade, with most of this being Taiwanese investment in the mainland. Some have suggested this has created a symbiotic relationship in which Taiwan will be pulled increasingly into China's orbit and ultimately be absorbed; China certainly hopes for this result. Taiwan's leaders have recognized this possibility and encouraged businesses to diversify their investment into other parts of Asia. This cross-strait economic relationship would make conflict in the area extremely costly for both parties. The underlying difficulty with the absorption theory, however, lies in the prospect for China's economy. Its rapid development during the 1980's and 1990's is no guarantee growth will continue at this pace. American analysts have suggested China's rapid economic growth has masked serious weaknesses in its banking system, state-owned enterprises, and other parts of the economic infrastructure.<sup>89</sup> Chinese have actually expressed concern that Taiwan might see a Chinese economic crisis as an opportunity to declare independence in the expectation China would be too distracted and disorganized to respond. Non-Chinese analysts have expressed concern the PRC might use military action against Taiwan to divert domestic attention from an internal political or economic crisis.

Some American China specialists have suggested the Chinese decision making system is one where good analysis and creative options are unlikely to survive the bureaucratic gauntlet to gain the attention of the actual decision makers.<sup>90</sup> This means success in easing tensions in the Taiwan Strait is unlikely to come from the Chinese side.

Chinese strategic culture differs from the American way of way in significant ways – use of these two different terms is intended to demonstrate this, although they oversimplify matters somewhat. China's strategic concept is broader than the American, more multidimensional and

integrated. Well before conflict begins, China begins an integrated psychological, political, diplomatic, economic and military offensive intended to isolate and unsettle its potential adversary. Following Sun Zi's famous (and widely misunderstood) adage,<sup>91</sup> it attempts to achieve victory without war, but, because this rarely happens, it also aims to shape the multidimensional battlefield before the adversary realizes there is a battlefield. So Chinese goals are more complex than American policy makers recognize. As a result, Americans are often unsure what is at stake and what counts for victory or defeat. An example of this from the Chinese cultural area is the 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam. American military still (rightly) count this as a great military victory, but rarely realize this was beside the point. North Vietnam gained a greater psychological victory when and where it counted, and for them that was enough. So, in any Taiwan Strait crisis, China probably will be engaged strategically before the U.S. realizes a crisis exists (as in 1995), hoping to outmaneuver the U.S. and foreclose options during any combat phase.

China's preferred course of action would be to deter Taiwan from taking any step toward a degree of independence greater than already exists. It can attempt this using military threats, psychological warfare, and economic pressures. China does not appear to consider this a viable alternative for the long term because of domestic changes on Taiwan. This should not prevent American and Taiwanese policy makers from seeking innovative ways of maintaining the current situation that China might accept.

Deterrence for China includes both discouraging the U.S. and Taiwan from saying or doing things on a routine basis that enhance Taiwan's separateness from China and preventing American intervention in support of Taiwan should China decide it has to take direct action against the island and its government. These two different forms of deterrence require different strategies. In carrying out the first form of deterrence, China can and does provide weaponry and other support to rogue states challenging the U.S. in other parts of the world in order to demonstrate China's ability to complicate American foreign policy. The intent is to convince the U.S. to desist from selling weapons to Taiwan in exchange for China's not selling weapons to Iran and similar states.<sup>92</sup> It also directs U.S. political and combat power away from China toward other regions of the world, reducing American ability to respond to future Chinese action. China has been using this strategy since the early 1990's. China can and does use the lure of its potential market and trading relationship to discourage American support for Taiwan and even to have major American manufacturers lobby in its behalf. When this fails, China has not been reluctant to use trade as a form of coercive diplomacy.

China has a pattern of provoking crises in order to test its adversaries' reactions and show them the political and possible military costs of pursuing policies antagonistic to China.<sup>93</sup>

Because China views crises as providing opportunity, not only danger, it is willing to create a sense of crisis for its adversary and historically has been successful in evaluating risk. China could use a series of carefully orchestrated crises in an attempt to unsettle the U.S. and Taiwan populations, divide the two parties, and damage their will to fight. This is a low-risk strategy, but it is not risk-free. Just as in 1995-96, the possibility of miscommunication raises the risk of unintended escalation.

In seeking to deter the U.S. from responding militarily to Chinese initiatives to gain physical control of Taiwan, the PRC has a range of options. China's most likely courses of action, in terms of its strategic culture, are those that could be carried out successfully before the U.S. could mount a response or those that never rise to a level that would trigger a U.S. military response. The latter could be either a low-intensity, unconventional attack on Taiwan's economic infrastructure or a long-term attempt to interfere with Taiwan's sea lines of communication, disrupting the international trade that is the island's lifeblood and interfering with the flow of raw materials, especially oil, vital to Taiwan's industrial economy. So China's best options are a quick, intense surprise attack and a slow, low intensity strangulation campaign.

Because Taiwan is resource poor and has the world's second densest population, its survival depends on having a thriving export economy supplied by a steady flow of oil and other raw materials.<sup>94</sup> During the 1995-96 crisis, the PRC learned it can disrupt Taiwan economically and possibly destabilize it politically at an acceptable cost and without the need for direct confrontation.<sup>95</sup> It could accomplish this through a protracted, low-level crisis. This would both make it difficult for the U.S. to decide when the best time would be to intervene, if at all, and would wear out both the U.S. and Taiwan. This is a situation where a dictatorship has the advantage over democracies in that they find it difficult to tolerate extended conflict unless national survival is clearly threatened or important national interests are clearly explained.

Presenting the U.S. with a *fait accompli* would be the most advantageous direct military course for China, although it would have serious political and diplomatic consequences in the region – consequences China says it is willing to live with. This would mean the U.S. would have to counter PRC action with its own invasion of the island to restore Taiwan's independence. To gain the support of U.S. public opinion for this would be far more difficult than for assisting Taiwan in its own defense – unless the PRC's quick strike included preemptive attacks on U.S. forces in East Asia, something PRC military writers have discussed. Unfortunately, the Chinese discussion has emphasized U.S. timidity in Somalia, Haiti, and Kosovo, and concluded the U.S. has such an aversion to casualties it might be prevented from acting. These writers have ignored the lesson of Pearl Harbor and forgotten American willingness to suffer major

casualties in the Persian Gulf in 1991. Chinese belief the U.S. is casualty-averse could lead it to take provocative actions that would almost certainly result in war in the Taiwan Strait. Thus, one crucial element for U.S. crisis deterrence must be to disabuse the PRC of this dangerous misperception about American casualties.

A second difficulty for the U.S. in the face of a swift and successful PRC conquest of Taiwan would be the response of America's Asian allies. The U.S. would require, at a minimum, use of regional bases and local logistical support to mount a military response to the PRC. In the face of a *fait accompli*, regional allies would be far less likely to provide such support. This would be the result of limited domestic public support coupled with fear of PRC retaliation using its ballistic missile force and economic warfare. Japan is the only nation with first-hand experience of nuclear attack. A Chinese threat, coupled with doubt the U.S. would be willing to suffer a nuclear attack in Japan's defense, almost certainly would mean Japanese refusal to assist the U.S. in any way in supporting Taiwan.

One form of the *fait accompli* the Chinese have discussed is a surprise attack on Taiwan, Japan, and American military facilities in the East Asia-Pacific region. Some Chinese believe this would render all three parties unable to respond militarily to China before it could gain control of the island and would so shock the populations psychologically that they would not permit their governments to act. Classic Chinese military writers emphasize the use of surprise and shock to gain strategic advantage.<sup>96</sup> Few American analysts and decision makers take this as seriously as Chinese military history would seem to warrant,<sup>97</sup> and Taiwan is unprepared militarily or psychologically for such an eventuality.

Such a preemptive strike could be a conventional attack on Taiwanese, American, and Japanese military assets in the region coupled with one or more high altitude electromagnetic pulses delivered by nuclear weapons in the upper atmosphere. This would have the advantage of devastating high tech weaponry without the retaliatory consequences a direct nuclear attack would provoke.

The Chinese military was very much impressed by American technological warfare against Iraq in 1991 and Serbia in 1999. It wants to develop some of those capabilities as well as countermeasures against them, but realizes catching up to the U.S. is unlikely. China has concluded, however, that this American capability is vulnerable to counterattack in unexpected ways. According to some Chinese, a virus or hacker attack on U.S. military computer networks that would shut down command, control, communications, and intelligence (C<sup>3</sup>I), could render the U.S. military deaf, dumb, and blind.

The least risky option for the PRC would be an information warfare (IW) operation directed against Taiwan's banking system, stock market, and communications system combined with sabotage of the electrical grid, transportation network, and early warning system. This requires the PRC to develop IW capabilities it does not currently possess while Taiwan's IW defenses improve only marginally.<sup>98</sup> It would be a relatively long-term operation with no assurance of success. The PRC may already have sufficient special operations capability for the sabotage aspect of such an operation and has discussed openly developing an IW capability not only to damage Taiwan's economy and communications but also the U.S. information and financial infrastructure, which it considers vulnerable. Given Taiwan's dependence on foreign raw materials and continuing international trade for viability, such serious disruption would devastate the economy and possibly panic the populace. If applied only to Taiwan, this course of action has the advantage that it is unlikely to rise to the level where the U.S. could muster domestic support for intervention or determine an effective way to intervene. It could even be carried out covertly. An IW attack on this same scale on American government and civilian computer networks probably would result in a public outcry for retaliation.

This option becomes increasingly attractive as Taiwan becomes more democratic because of the increasing openness of the society. The PRC is concerned with this democratic trend for four reasons: it means the PRC cannot reach an agreement with Kuomintang leaders apart from the people of Taiwan (similar to what happened to Hong Kong and Macao), the people of Taiwan find political union with the repressive and comparatively backward PRC increasingly less attractive, a democratic Taiwan demonstrates democracy and Chinese culture are not incompatible (a contribution to the Asian values debate), and the continued existence of a democratic Taiwan is easier for western democracies to justify defending.

A second course of action, currently beyond the PRC's capability, would be an attack by precision guided ballistic and cruise missiles against Taiwan's air force bases, radar installations, and command and control centers. The PRC then could quickly achieve air superiority over the strait and Taiwan itself. This would allow the air drop of assault divisions, capture of Taiwan's ports, and the movement of large numbers of soldiers quickly across the strait, followed by occupation of the island. This scenario assumes the PRC can keep all of its attack preparations hidden from U.S. and Taiwan intelligence, that a missile attack followed by aircraft attacks would rapidly destroy Taiwan's air force, PRC troops delivered by aircraft could defeat Taiwan's army on the ground, and the PRC could synchronize such a massive joint operations – all of this before the U.S. or the international community could react to block the PRC. Although PRC writers have mentioned this course of action, each assumption is to some degree ques-

tionable. That the PRC can develop precision missiles within a decade is probable; that the result of their use will be as described is less likely. RAND analysts recently concluded a missile attack, especially if China can argue it was directed exclusively against military targets, might not receive as serious an international response as would an invasion or an indiscriminate missile attack. They also offer several historical examples to show such an attack might seriously affect Taiwanese morale.<sup>99</sup> In 1995, a Chinese officer told an American visitor China could break Taiwan's will to resist by firing one missile a day for a month at the island.<sup>100</sup>

A third option that has often been suggested is some form of blockade. Nicholas Kristoff says a 30-day blockade would make clear to Taiwan the regional power relationship.<sup>101</sup> The purpose of this would be to cripple Taiwan's economy and further isolate it diplomatically. Chinese leaders appear to believe this would be less provocative than missiles or an invasion, but it would tax China's naval forces to enforce a full blockade. Anything less than a full blockade would take so long to be effective that Taiwan and its friends could develop countermeasures. Michael O'Hanlon says, "Even a limited blockade effort conducted by China's modest modern submarine force could stand a reasonable chance of dragging down Taiwan's economy – and keeping it down for a prolonged period. U.S. military intervention might be needed to break the blockade quickly."<sup>102</sup>

A variation on this would involve using the PRC's most modern submarines to lay mine-fields outside Taiwan's main harbors and even threatening to sink commercial vessels that entered an exclusion zone outside Taiwan's main ports. This could be part of a larger blockade or implemented on its own. The sinking of one merchant ship would virtually halt sea borne commerce and devastate Taiwan's economy. This is within the PRC's current capabilities, but might also lead to U.S. intervention. If this operation could be spread over a sufficiently long period, the U.S. might tire of involvement and Taiwan become too worn down to continue resistance. The result, again, would be disruption and collapse of the Taiwanese economy with a probable capitulation by Taiwan.

The PRC's "one China" claim provides legal cover for this option. Blockades are acts of war under international law, but because it considers Taiwan a part of China, the PRC asserts any blockade of the island is solely a domestic matter. When considered in conjunction with China's self-understanding as a moral actor, the domestic claim points in the direction of some form of blockade if the other relevant factors are conducive.

The least likely scenarios are those involving an amphibious assault across the Taiwan Strait and those involving a nuclear attack on Taiwan. The first is impossible without PRC air superiority over the Taiwan Strait and additional sealift capacity. It would little chance of suc-

cess and the cost of failure would be high, including the almost certain independence of Taiwan. This would be the last resort of a desperate Chinese government. The second course would produce a hollow victory with Taiwan's economy destroyed, its surviving population forever alienated, and the PRC an international pariah. China has stated repeatedly that it will not use nuclear weapons against other Chinese; the threat of their use appears directed at American and Japanese intervention. Even if the PRC were willing to pay the price for use of nuclear weapons, there are better ways to achieve its goal.<sup>103</sup>

Distinct from actual use of nuclear weapons would be the threat to use such weapons against the continental U.S. or deployed U.S. forces. A U.S. president would have to consider carefully how the crisis appeared to a rational actor on the Chinese side before deciding whether the threat was serious or a bluff. There are no adequate historical analogies to help in making this decision. The threat to use nuclear weapons is the most powerful deterrent the PRC has to discourage American involvement in any Taiwan conflict, but actual use of such weapons would invite a massive retaliatory response.

Although some have suggested PRC capture of one or more of the offshore islands as a means of intimidating Taiwan, this is not an option. Since the 1950's, the PRC has sought to keep Taiwan, the Pescadores, and the offshore islands united as a political entity. Separation of the offshore islands from the rest of the territory governed by Taiwan would weaken the link between Taiwan and the PRC and thus any claim by the PRC to rights over Taiwan. So the last thing the PRC wants is for Taiwan to evacuate the offshore islands. Further, while the PRC could successfully invade the offshore islands today, they remain well defended. The result would be the waste of PRC military resources on what is, at best, a secondary target and a high diplomatic cost in terms of relations with the U.S. and other East and Southeast Asian nations.

Currently, the PRC believes it can achieve its goal without resorting to the direct use of military force. It is convinced that if it does use force, the U.S. will intervene on the side of Taiwan. China also recognizes the U.S. is greatly superior to China militarily. If the day ever comes that China believes war is inevitable, it will seek to choose the time, place (or places), and nature of the conflict so as to overcome the American material advantage through strategic and tactical surprise. China's targets will be those Taiwanese, American, and Japanese assets most able to respond to China militarily and those whose destruction will deliver the sharpest psychological blow to China's potential adversaries.

## TAIWAN'S OPTIONS

Taiwan has few viable options. Its best option appears to be to lay low and hope the PRC is distracted by other international or domestic concerns. This is a passive option, however, and leaves the initiative with China. Taiwan's leaders and people are unlikely to be comfortable with that. What is clear is that the people of Taiwan do not want to become part of the PRC and they now have a say in the matter. "Although Taiwanese welcome the profits of cross-Strait business and treasure the opportunity to visit family, many have concluded that China is too backward, repressive and mired in arbitrary regulations to make unification appealing in the foreseeable future."<sup>104</sup>

The island's political development during the past decade precludes a simple unification with the mainland. Recent developments in Hong Kong raise questions about how the "one government-two systems" would work in practice. Taiwan's best interest is served by seeking to maintain the status quo and offering the PRC no excuse to alter that status quo. The safest path is to maintain a low profile internationally while highlighting its democratic political system and thriving economy, improve its defensive capability by buying the mundane weapons systems it needs instead of the flashy ones it wants, developing or improving informal, low-key relationships with the United States and other regional actors, and taking no actions that the PRC could interpret as steps toward *formal* independence. Taiwan needs to prepare its citizens for the domestic impact of PRC action and make critical improvements to its defenses against special operations and surprise attack.

During the mid-1990's, Taiwan's highly visible "vacation diplomacy," which reached its peak with Lee Teng-hui's visit to Cornell in the summer of 1995, precipitated the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crisis. Lee's comments about state-to-state relations with the PRC created a mini-crisis in 1999. Chen Shui-bien, Lee's successor, has muted Lee's language but has yet to overcome Beijing's concern about his membership in the Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan's pro-independence party. Taiwan's best hope for continued independent and peaceful existence lies in maintaining such a low international profile that China occupies itself with its many other pressing concerns. Apart from this, Taiwanese leaders should begin to develop unconventional options that can respond to PRC concerns and preserve PRC "face" while preserving a separate existence for the island and its population.

## U.S. OPTIONS

The United States has a broad range of options, not all of which are equally beneficial to the U.S. national interest or equally viable. There are two levels of options regarding Taiwan. The first deals with U.S. actions on a day-to-day basis when the situation is relatively calm and their aim is to maintain that calm. The intent is that good decision making and execution will prevent crises from developing. The second concerns what the U.S. should do when a crisis occurs. The purpose is two-fold: to prevent the crisis from becoming a shooting war, and to prevail should war break out. The former includes unofficial travel between the U.S. and Taiwan, types of weapons systems that will be sold to Taiwan, unofficial military exchanges and coordination with Taiwan, official military exchanges with the PRC, deployment of a missile defense system, and similar actions whose cumulative effect will influence U.S.-China-Taiwan relations. The latter involves trying to persuade both China and Taiwan not to choose a military solution to the relationship or provoke the other party to do so. They can take such forms as naval deployments, political and economic sanctions, or breaking a blockade, and direct military intervention.

American policy makers have not tried seriously to use China's stated fear of a resurgent Japan to encourage China to moderate its international behavior. One benefit China gains from a strong U.S. presence in East Asia is a Japan whose military capability does not match its economic and political strength. Although China professes to be unable to understand why Japan might have any reason to fear it, an American departure from East Asia or failure to keep its commitments is likely to cause Japan to consider rearming. If Japan were to apply its technological and industrial capability to military development, China should have grounds for concern. When China complains about a forward American presence in East Asia – including Taiwan – the U.S. can remind China's leaders this is a cheap price to pay for not having to worry about a militarized Japan.

The U.S. remains obligated under the Taiwan Relations Act to provide Taiwan with adequate defensive weaponry to defend itself. The emphasis should be on low profile, defensive weaponry that Taiwan needs for protection in areas of current PRC advantage. The greatest needs are for anti-submarine and mine clearing capabilities, a more flexible command and control system, and missile defense (although nothing is available that can protect against China's current missile capability). China also needs to be aware it does not have veto power over U.S. weapons sales.

Economic threats have often been suggested as a way to deter Chinese action. Actually, the only successful economic threats have been those China has made to the United States. Threatening sanctions has only turned China to alternate suppliers and led to vigorous lobbying by American businesses. Given the size of the U.S.-China trade imbalance, the only successful economic pressure would be to deny American markets to China.

The crisis-related options include withdrawing from the situation, seeking to maintain the status quo, or abandoning the policy of strategic ambiguity and taking a clear position in support of the PRC or Taiwan.<sup>105</sup> Much more than for China, American intervention options must be evaluated in the context of domestic public opinion. A recent poll by the Foreign Policy Association questions the likelihood of popular support for American military intervention if the PRC invades Taiwan, the most blatant option Beijing has.<sup>106</sup> A second limit to U.S. action is that as a superpower it has many interests other than those in the Taiwan area. One or more of those may be claiming American attention and resources when a Taiwan crisis develops and may have a higher priority. Also, U.S. action in one area affects relations with nations in other areas just as U.S. actions in Kosovo have drawn a Chinese response about American hegemonism.

The foundation of U.S. policy for the past half century has been the policy of “strategic ambiguity.” This has left both the PRC and Taiwan unsure of how the U.S. would respond to conflict in the Taiwan Strait – and that is how U.S. leaders have wanted it. Despite recent suggestions to the contrary, this policy should be retained. It may not be the best policy, but none of the alternatives is better.

The policy’s great advantage is that it gives the U.S. room to maneuver. It also encourages caution on the part of both China and Taiwan because neither can ever be quite sure how the U.S. will act in a particular situation. The policy reflects the reality that the U.S. cannot be sure how it will act in the event of a crisis until one actually occurs. Too much of a shift in either direction is liable to tempt the gaining party to take destabilizing risks. The U.S. can always fill in some details quietly to each party within the overall policy.

Probably the greatest advantage in an age of media-driven foreign policy is that everyone knows the U.S. probably will act, but no one is quite sure how. The imprecision of strategic ambiguity provides U.S. leaders with flexibility and time to think in the event a crisis arises. The U.S. response can be tailored to the context of the particular crisis and not constrained by previous public commitments. If the U.S. does decide it must act to prevent Chinese action against Taiwan, it should do so early enough to permit China a way out that doesn’t cause it to lose face – as happened in 1996.

Withdrawal would have the same practical result as openly supporting the PRC's claim to Taiwan. (China has said for half a century that if the U.S. had not intervened in June 1950, the PRC would have successfully invaded Taiwan within a year.) Both courses would have domestic U.S. and regional repercussions. Domestically, there would be a revival of the "Who lost China?" debate of the 1950's, exacerbated by the fact Taiwan today is a democracy in a way Nationalist China never could even pretend to be. Regionally, the action would call into question the credibility of U.S. commitments to allies.<sup>107</sup> These allies likely would seek alternate security means. Here, it is Japan with its military and technological potential and regional history that becomes a matter of concern. According to Charles Freeman, "A U.S. failure to respond to a PRC attack on Taiwan would so devalue the U.S.-Japan relationship that Japanese would feel even more impelled to develop a military capable of independent action to defend their strategic interest."<sup>108</sup>

Open U.S. support for Taiwan might not lead to a formal declaration of independence, but certainly would encourage Taiwan in that direction. This would require a clear American security commitment. This would be unacceptable to the PRC and certainly would result in its use of coercion against the U.S. and Taiwan. A declaration of independence or Taiwan's obstinacy in the face of PRC coercion probably would result in military conflict. Open U.S. support of Taiwan could mean U.S. facilities in the region would be targeted as well as the Taiwan military. PRC writers have discussed this eventuality and Chinese military history demonstrates readiness to use preemptive strikes, especially against more powerful foes.<sup>109</sup>

During the crises of the 1950's and 1960's, the United States was able to plan how to deal with China without having to take into account China's capability to harm American forces in Japan or the Philippines, much less the continental United States. For any future crisis involving the PRC, the U.S. must consider China's potential use of conventional and nuclear weapons against U.S. forces in East Asia and civilian targets in the continental United States. While many consider the notorious 1995 statement by a senior Chinese general to former Assistant Secretary of Defense Charles Freeman that the PRC could act militarily against Taiwan without fear of intervention by the United States because U.S. leaders "care more about Los Angeles than they do about Taiwan" to include a great deal of bluff, it would be foolish to ignore such threats. It is not clear that the PRC leadership understands the seriousness of using nuclear weapons against another nuclear power, especially first use. In any case, all future U.S. planning regarding Taiwan must include the remote possibility that it could escalate into a nuclear war.

Current U.S. doctrine includes attacking the enemy's command and control system, strategic weapons, airfields, and communications and utilities infrastructure, but the U.S. has never been at war, even a regional war, with another nuclear power. American war planning for the Taiwan Strait should consider potential consequences of striking Mainland Chinese facilities – or allowing Taiwan to do so – and consider alternatives that do not risk escalation to nuclear war.<sup>110</sup>

Another possibility U.S. planners must consider is a protracted crisis. Democracies do not handle long-term conflicts well, and the U.S. has an international reputation for its desire to get in, get done, and get out. The PRC would be at an advantage in an extended crisis situation where the United States would have to deploy resources to the region over an extended period, without the crisis ever rising to a level that would require military intervention. How the American public, Congress, and American allies would respond to the expense, stress, and impact on the U.S. to meet its responsibilities in other crisis areas is unclear.

A possible U.S. option lies with China self-image as a moral exemplar. This both places a limit on how the U.S. can deal with China and opens a door. The limit is that the U.S. should neither put China in a place where it is forced to see itself or others see it as acting immorally nor use language that portrays China's behavior toward Taiwan as immoral. At the same time, it might be possible to portray to China what could constitute a settlement of the Taiwan situation that leaves Taiwan separate from China but puts China in a morally favorable light. This would have to be approached cautiously because of China's sovereignty concerns and fears of internal instability, but as a long-term process, it might offer the greatest prospect of enduring peace. One possible path might be to emphasize to China the differences between Taiwan and the mainland regions that concern it, including democratic development, different economic system, and separate history. Taiwan would have to be encouraged at the same time to accept the status quo with its lack of "international space" for the foreseeable future in order to ease pressure on Chinese leaders to act against it. To be successful, a policy of this type would have to maintain the status quo for several generations in hope Chinese irredentism would moderate over time.

Deterrence theory suggests effective deterrence requires understanding the motivation and degree of determination of our adversary. Ellis says the U.S. should "determine the pressure points to which Chinese leadership will respond."<sup>111</sup> Applying this to China's expressed concern about national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the threat to encourage separatist movements within Mainland China would strike at a matter of expressed Chinese interest and concern. It would also be relatively inexpensive and unlikely to result in a direct U.S.-PRC mili-

tary confrontation. The downside of this option is that the potential deterrer needs to be able to turn off the threat as readily as he turns the threat on. This threat would require major preparation to implement and it could easily outpace the U.S.' ability to control or halt it. This option would also be constrained by American law governing covert operations and domestic opinion when it became public knowledge.

A final possibility, one whose application in this case is unclear, would be to make a conquered Taiwan appear much less valuable to China than it now does. This seems to be difficult to implement because China's greatest perceived benefit is territorial control, not economic resources or strategic position. Given Taiwan's rugged interior and history of guerrilla activity against occupiers, well-publicized preparations for such operations and a discrete American expression of readiness to encourage them would warn China it could be entering into a situation that could slowly bleed its resources in the way Vietnam did the U.S. and Afghanistan did the Soviet Union. But would this threat deter China? Probably not.

## **JAPAN'S ROLE**

More than half a century after its defeat in World War II, Japan remains in an awkward position in East Asia. Despite its peace constitution, relatively small military, and weakened economy, Japan's neighbors have not forgotten its modern imperialist history and continue to fear the possibilities of a remilitarized Japan. Japan has its own regional concerns, not the least of which is a potentially powerful China. Chinese success in the Taiwan Strait would only increase the PRC's regional power.

For Japan, the best option is continuation of the status quo, both in the China-Taiwan relationship and in the Japanese-American relationship. While the mutual security treaty and more recent security guidelines create obligation on Japan's part, they also protect Japan from the need to create a powerful military with the regional reaction this would engender.

Conflict in the Taiwan Strait would be a nightmare for Japan. It would force Japan to choose between its U.S. alliance and the strategic benefit of a non-hostile relationship with China. Freeman believes this dilemma would lead many Japanese to advocate developing an independent defense force to pursue Japan's strategic interests.<sup>112</sup> Because of lingering anti-Japanese feelings in China, Japanese involvement in any Taiwan crisis would likely exacerbate the crisis and even provoke escalation.<sup>113</sup>

Since the 1950's, Japan's leaders have conducted foreign policy in the shadow of World War II. The rising generation of Japanese leaders was born after the war, feels no guilt for it,

and appears less inclined to be tolerant of China.<sup>114</sup> They resent China's policy of manipulating guilt feelings of the Japanese people. They are also taking a close look at the U.S.-Japan security alliance. While the alliance is less costly and less threatening to Japan's neighbors than other options, it brings with it the domestic consequences of having 47,000 American military personnel stationed in Japan.

The Japanese Self-Defense Force is a small but modern military. If Japan chose an independent course in foreign and security affairs, it could quickly become the peer of any regional power (other than in size) except the United States. Japan's missile program could be militarized to provide long-range ballistic missiles and Japan has the technology, although probably not the will, to develop nuclear weapons. This option is not in Japan's interest. A nuclear weapons program would meet with strong domestic resistance and considerably increase tensions in the region.

## CONCLUSION

The Taiwan Strait has the potential to involve the United States in war with China within the decade. This is not only because the U.S. has interests in the East Asia-Pacific region that are in competition with those of China, but also because the current status of Taiwan focuses key American and Chinese interests in a way that demonstrates their incompatibility. The tension has existed for 50 years without war, but the past is no guarantee of the future. The leaders of the People's Republic of China appear to take the possibility of war more seriously than do American leaders and are preparing for that eventuality. There is the distinct possibility that the U.S. and Taiwan are preparing for a different type of military crisis than the PRC may be planning. The more this is true, the less successful will be deterrence efforts.

Part of the complexity the U.S. faces is its historical attachment to Taiwan, but "Taiwan is a place that Americans ought to like."<sup>115</sup> In a part of the world populated by dictatorships and often failed democracies, Taiwan has progressed in less than 15 years from a reactionary dictatorship to a government where the opposition party won the most recent presidential election. It has a strong economy, vibrant society, and a range of freedoms. Taiwan offers a model for other Asian states, and that makes China uncomfortable.

All parties would prefer the status quo to continue. This worked well through the late 1980's, but political and economic developments have upset it. As a result, China and Taiwan no longer understand the status quo in precisely the same way. The new dynamic threatens

regional stability because China faces the possibility of Taiwan following a separate path. Acquiescing in this would be political suicide for China's leaders.

Most discussion of the Taiwan situation emphasizes the military elements. These are important, but not the most important. The military emphasis avoids the hard work of developing non-military options acceptable to all the parties involved. This will not be an easy job, but it is essential. Just as strategists attempt to "think outside the box" to develop better military solutions, so too will policy makers have to think unconventionally about Taiwan to find creative possibilities short of war.

The U.S. military has been planning and wargaming conflict in the Taiwan Strait. The question is whether it has been preparing for the right conflict. When deterrence breaks down, the courses of action the U.S. has been preparing for are not necessarily the ones China chooses. China would prefer to gain control of Taiwan in a way that provides the U.S. no rationale for intervening and every incentive not to. American leaders should consider now how they might respond then, instead of waiting for a *fait accompli*. It is essential to convince Chinese decision makers to remember Pearl Harbor and not "Blackhawk Down" when they think about American willingness to fight. At the same time, U.S. and Taiwanese leaders should remember other, no less crucial lessons of Pearl Harbor.

China has many advantages when it comes to conflict in the Taiwan Strait. Geography is obvious, but probably even greater is timing. Unless Taiwan for some reason decides to take the initiative, China can decide when to act, how to act, and even where to act. The ideal time for China would be when the United States is distracted by conflict in some other part of the world (Israel, the Persian Gulf, the Balkans) and has deployed significant forces to deal with that conflict.

In a war over Taiwan, everyone will lose, although some will lose more than others. The military and economic cost will be high. Diplomatic and political repercussions are unclear, but they will be negative. The consequence of the PRC forcibly gaining control over Taiwan without an American response might be even more serious because of the regional military and political repercussions. China's stated interests are such that apart from an unexpected resolution of the tension in the area, deterrence will almost certainly fail in the long run. The United States will be able to delay Chinese action against Taiwan through much of this decade, but it will not be able to deter China indefinitely. This is because China does not believe American interests and commitment match those of China. The U.S. needs to clearly define and explain its national interests relating to Taiwan, both to the American public and China.

The best situation for all parties would be an indefinite continuation of the status quo and of the American policy of strategic ambiguity. This will require close coordination between the American executive and legislative branches, careful consideration of the military and political consequences of developing and deploying a missile defense system to the region, continued visible American military presence in the region, and encouragement to the PRC and Taiwan to explore unconventional options for settling the future status of Taiwan. One such option would be to build on China's self-image as a moral exemplar state.

For the United States, gaining a better understanding of how China views itself and its place in the world is a necessary starting point. U.S. policy makers also need to consider how their words and actions appear to Chinese and Taiwanese leaders. What they intend from their historical and cultural perspective is not necessarily what the Chinese see from theirs. At the same time, Americans should educate the Chinese on the extent of American interests in the region and the Taiwanese on the limits of those interests. No less important is recognizing the many Chinese misperceptions about the United States and seeking to correct them. Planners will need to take these misperceptions into account because they can increase political friction and lead to military conflict. The most serious misperception is that the U.S. is actively seeking to weaken China and subvert its government and every U.S. action in the region is directed toward this end.<sup>116</sup>

WORD COUNT = 21,673



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> In this study, People's Republic of China (PRC) or China designates the nation the United States, the United Nations, and most of the world's countries recognize as China. The government of the Republic of China and the island it is primarily located on is called Taiwan.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Carlucci, Robert Hunter, and Zalmay Khalilzad, "Taking Charge: A Bipartisan Report to the President Elect on Foreign Policy and National Security," (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), p. 22. See also Andrew Scobell, "Show of Force: Chinese Soldiers, Statesmen, and the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis," *Political Science Quarterly* 115 (2000):228 for a report of a similar conclusion from PRC analysts.

<sup>3</sup> Richard K. Betts and Thomas J. Christensen, "China: Getting the Questions Right," *National Interest* 62 (Winter 2000/2001):17.

<sup>4</sup> Denny Roy, "Tensions in the Taiwan Strait," *Survival* 42 (2000):78.

<sup>5</sup> I am indebted to Alan Wachman for the language to make this distinction between delaying and deterring clear.

<sup>6</sup> I am indebted to Andrew Scobell for emphasizing to me the PRC's self-image as an international moral leader.

<sup>7</sup> Scobell agrees with this assessment that Taiwan only became a Chinese irredentist concern near the end of the civil war when it appeared Chiang Kai-shek would make his final stand there. See Andrew Scobell, "Taiwan as Macedonia? Strait Tension as a Syndrome," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 21 (1998): 200.

<sup>8</sup> Memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense, August 17, 1949, in *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1949, Volume IX: China (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), pp. 376-378.

<sup>9</sup> Memo by George Kennan, July 6, 1949, in *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1949, Volume IX: The Far East: China (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), pp. 356-358.

<sup>10</sup> Memorandum from W. W. Butterworth to Dean Rusk, dated June 9, 1949; memorandum by George Kennan, dated July 6, 1949; and a detailed action plan from Kennan's office, dated June 23, 1949, all in *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1949, vol. IX: The Far East: China (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), pp. 347, 356-358, 359-364. By the following May, these proposals were making their way to Secretary of State Dean Acheson.

<sup>11</sup> Hao Yufan and Zhai Zihai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History Revisited," *China Quarterly* 121 (1990):115.

<sup>12</sup> Cited in Jaw-ling Joanne Chang, "Lessons from the Taiwan Relations Act," *Orbis* 44 (2000):69.

<sup>13</sup> While some analysts have viewed the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crisis as much ado about nothing, others have pointed out that the Chinese actions of missile tests near Taiwan's major ports and wargames portraying an invasion and U.S. response of deploying two carrier battle groups could all too easily have resulted in hostilities.

<sup>14</sup> Alan Wachman, *Challenges and Opportunities in the Taiwan Strait: Defining America's Role*, China Policy Series Number 17 (New York: National Committee on United States-China Relations, 2001), p. 27.

<sup>15</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). Scobell has suggested both the Confucian-Mencian and *realpolitik* approaches are operative and interactive, combining dialectically. This could explain how China can display realism while at the same time claiming the moral high ground. Scobell made his suggestion at a conference on "The Rise of China: Security Implications" in Chapel Hill, NC, March 2-3, 2001.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 256-257.

<sup>17</sup> In his *China Debates the Future Security Environment* (Washington: National Defense University, 2000), pp. xv and 39, Michael Pillsbury applies this to the U.S.-PRC relationship and comments in particular that China seems to assume other nations share its view about the future use of military force.

<sup>18</sup> Most of the insights in this paragraph come from Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

<sup>19</sup> Ezra F. Vogel, "Current U.S.-China Relations," *Harvard China Review* 2 (Spring/Summer 2000):21-22.

<sup>20</sup> Phillip C. Saunders, "China's America Watchers: Changing Attitudes Towards the United States," *China Quarterly* 161 (2000):50-51.

<sup>21</sup> John W. Garver, *Face Off: China, the United States, and Taiwan's Democratization* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 150-151.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Halloran, "Who's the Sleeping Tiger Now? US?" *Boston Globe*, September 10, 2000, p. F2. Halloran was specifically addressing the U.S.-China-Taiwan relationship and challenging the widespread misperception that the U.S. is afraid to suffer casualties under any circumstance.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Sobol at a discussion of his new book *The Impact of Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy Since Vietnam* at the Harvard COOP Bookstore, March 12, 2001.

<sup>24</sup> Statement of Zhu Xianlong in *Zhongguo Pinglun*, March 5, 1999, p. 88, quoted in Roy, "Tensions in the Taiwan Strait," p. 88. See also Andrew J. Nathan, "China's Goals in the Taiwan Strait," *China Journal* 36 (1996):90.

<sup>25</sup> See Phillip C. Saunders, "Project Strait Talk: Security and Stability in the Taiwan Strait," Center for Nonproliferation Studies (Monterey: Monterey Institute of International Studies, July 2000), pp. 5, 6.

<sup>26</sup> Desmond Ball, "Strategic Culture in the Asian-Pacific Region," *Security Studies* 3 (1993):63-64.

<sup>27</sup> Saunders, p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Alan Wachman at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, February 8, 2001. Dr. Wachman was one of the academics involved in the conversation.

<sup>29</sup> Vogel, pp. 21-22.

<sup>30</sup> Garver, p. 147.

<sup>31</sup> Garver, p. 147.

<sup>32</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, "China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992: A First Cut at the Data," *China Quarterly* 153 (1998):2.

<sup>33</sup> Although some regard the PRC a status quo state and the U.S. a revolutionary state with regard to Taiwan.

<sup>34</sup> I will discuss scenarios for surprise attack and Chinese strategic culture in later sections.

<sup>35</sup> Andrew Scobell, *Show of Force: The PLA and the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait Crisis*, Strategic Studies Institute (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 1999), p. 16.

<sup>36</sup> Taiwan Affairs Office and Information Office of the PRC State Council, "The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue," (issued February 21, 2000) *Asian Affairs* 27 (2000):37-53.

<sup>37</sup> William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a Global Age* (Washington: The White House, December 2000), p. 51.

<sup>38</sup> Jacob K. Javits, "Congress and Foreign Relations: The Taiwan Relations Act," *Foreign Affairs* 60 (Fall 1981):59.

<sup>39</sup> Ralph N. Clough, *Reaching Across the Taiwan Strait: People-to-People Diplomacy* (Boulder: Westview, 1993), p. 187.

<sup>40</sup> Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Struggle for Mastery in Asia," *Commentary* 110 (November 2000):17. At the IFPA-Fletcher-USMC Security Conference on "Expeditionary Solutions for a Gordian World" on March 26, 2001, in Cambridge, MA, Ambassador Stephen Bosworth said if an East Asian state achieved regional hegemonic status, U.S. vital interests would be very much affected. William Perry, then Secretary of Defense, says that in March 1996, then National Security Advisor Anthony Lake told a delegation of senior Chinese officials that the U.S. has vital national security interests in the western Pacific and the ongoing Chinese missile firings threatened those interests. See Ashton B. Carter and William J. Perry, *Preventative Defense: A New Security Strategy for America* (Washington: Brookings Institute, 1999), pp. 96-97.

<sup>41</sup> Kurt Campbell, in a luncheon presentation at MIT's Security Studies Program, November 1, 2000.

<sup>42</sup> Sandy Berger, National Security Adviser during the second Clinton administration, at Harvard's JFK School of Government, on March 12, 2001.

<sup>43</sup> Gary Klintworth, "China and Taiwan – From Flashpoint to Redefining China," Research Paper 15, 2000-2001, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group, Parliament of Australia, Parliamentary Library, November 7, 2000, p. 19 (downloaded from <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rp/2000-01/01rp15>). Klintworth is skeptical of Chinese interest in and the possibility of war in the Taiwan Strait "in the foreseeable future." (p. 27)

<sup>44</sup> Douglas Porch, "The Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1996: Strategic Implications for the United States Navy," *Naval War College Review* 52 (1999):29.

<sup>45</sup> Ephraim Kam, *Surprise Attack: The Victim's Perspective* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 71.

<sup>46</sup> Recent reports suggest both the PRC and Taiwan have not completely integrated the weaponry they possess. In addition, the PRC pilots do not appear to be well trained or to receive sufficient flying hours each year to maintain proficiency. Taiwan has been reported to suffer a lack of pilots for its latest generation fighters because many pilots leave the air force to fly for the airlines.

<sup>47</sup> Department of Defense, "Report to Congress Pursuant to Public Law 106-113," December 18, 2000 (downloaded from DefenseLink at [http://www.defenselink.mil/twstrait\\_12182000.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/twstrait_12182000.html) on December 20, 2000).

<sup>48</sup> Secretary of Defense, "The Security Situation in the Taiwan Strait: Report to Congress Pursuant to the FY99 Appropriations Bill," February 26, 1999, p. 20 (downloaded from [Defense-link.mil/pubs/twstrait\\_02261999.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/twstrait_02261999.html)). Absence of third-party intervention is a very big if, but I am skeptical the PRC will be able to conduct a successful invasion as early as 2005.

<sup>49</sup> Chong-pin Lin, "The Military Balance in the Taiwan Straits," *China Quarterly* 146 (1996):594.

<sup>50</sup> Mark A. Stokes, *China's Strategic Modernization: Implications for the United States*, Strategic Studies Institute (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1999), p. 145.

<sup>51</sup> Jason D. Ellis and Todd M. Koca, "China Rising: New Challenges to the U.S. Security Posture," Strategic Forum number 175, Institute for National Security Studies (Washington: National Defense University, 2000), p. 7.

<sup>52</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense, "Annual Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China," June 2000, p. 21 (downloaded from <http://www.defenselink.mil.news/JUN2000/chin0622200> on November 27, 2000).

<sup>53</sup> Timothy L. Thomas, "Like Adding Wings to a Tiger: Chinese Information War Theory and Practice," Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, 2001, p. 2 (downloaded from <http://call.army.mil/call/fmso/fmsopubs/issues/China> on February 1, 2001).

<sup>54</sup> Stokes, p. 137.

<sup>55</sup> Tim Thomas, "China's Technological Stratagems," *Jane's Intelligence Review* 12 (December 2000):39.

<sup>56</sup> Institute for national Security Studies, "Final Report of Pacific Symposium 2000: Asian Perspectives on the Challenges of China, March 7-8, 2000," (Washington: National Defense University, 2000), p. 3 (downloaded from the NDU website on October 9, 2000).

<sup>57</sup> Tom Donnelly, "Dire Strait," *Jane's Defense Weekly* 35 (March 14, 2001):26.

<sup>58</sup> David A. Shlapak, David T. Orlesky, and Barry A. Wilson, *Dire Strait? Aspects of the China-Taiwan Confrontation and Options for U.S. Policy* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), pp. 51-54.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas J. Christensen, "Theater Missile Defense and Taiwan's Security," *Orbis* 44 (2000):83.

<sup>60</sup> "Taiwan's battlefield information technology – i.e., its command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C<sup>4</sup>I) – is one of the most sophisticated in the world and certainly superior to anything likely to be possessed by China in the near or medium term." Gary Klintworth, "Chinese Defense Modernization and the Security of Taiwan," p. 160, in Jonathan D. Pollock and Richard H. Yang (eds.), *In China's Shadow: Regional Perspectives on Chinese Foreign Policy and Military Development* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1998).

<sup>61</sup> Mark A. Stokes, "China's Military Space and Conventional Theater Missile Development: Implications for Security in the Taiwan Strait," p. 151, in Susan M. Puska (ed.), *People's Liberation Army after Next*, Strategic Studies Institute (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2000). Along the same line, Gary Klintworth writes, "China's missile posturing thus far has only succeeded in pushing Taiwan towards acquiring missile defences either from within its own impressive technological resources or by enlisting support from the U.S." (Klintworth, p. 19.)

<sup>62</sup> "White Paper: China's National Defense in 2000," October 16, 2000, p. 10 (downloaded from the China Internet Information Center at <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2791.htm> on October 17, 2000).

<sup>63</sup> Johnston, "China's Militarized Interstate Dispute Behaviour 1949-1992: A First Cut at the Data," pp. 6-7, 28-29.

<sup>64</sup> " 'Reasonable' Western thinking finds it very difficult to accept that there are some conflicts which cannot be 'settled' other than by brute force." Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), p. 55.

<sup>65</sup> Americans forget that other countries have the same problem in dealing with the United States, where domestic concerns often take priority over what would otherwise be pressing foreign policy matters and can lead to foreign policy decisions that make no sense if one does not know the domestic influences at work.

<sup>66</sup> I have drawn much of what I say about deterrence theory from Edward Rhoades, "Conventional Deterrence," *Comparative Strategy* 19 (2000):221-253, and Keith B. Payne, *Deterrence in the Second Nuclear Age* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996). For attempts

to apply deterrence theory to China, I am indebted to Robert S. Ross, Shu Guang Zhang, and Abram N. Shulsky, among others. The conclusions with respect to China, however, are my own.

<sup>67</sup> Abram N. Shulsky, *Deterrence Theory and Chinese Behavior* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2000), p. 17.

<sup>68</sup> This is not only a matter of applying moral standards to deterrence; I believe a grossly disproportional threat is likely to lack credibility. So such a threat would neither moral nor a deterrent. My assumption here is that we should apply Just War criteria to deterrence in the same way we do (or should do) to war itself. After all, when deterrence fails, war is usually the result. I recognize that for many this assumption creates a difficulty in regard to nuclear deterrence, but that is all the more reason to inject moral criteria at the beginning of the process instead of appending them as an afterthought.

<sup>69</sup> Allen S. Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 109-110.

<sup>70</sup> Shu Guang Zhang, *Deterrence and Strategic Culture: Chinese-American Confrontations, 1949-1958* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1992), p. 272, 4.

<sup>71</sup> Rhoades, pp. 222, 228.

<sup>72</sup> Rhoades, pp. 234-238.

<sup>73</sup> Payne, p. 79.

<sup>74</sup> Rhoades, p. 243.

<sup>75</sup> Robert Jervis, quoted in Rhoades, p. 238.

<sup>76</sup> Rhoades, p. 239.

<sup>77</sup> "Because it is the challenger who ultimately chooses whether to be deterred but who cannot be controlled predictably, no deterrer, including the United States, can establish deterrence policies that it can be confident are 'ensured' or 'conclusive.' " (Payne, p. 121).

<sup>78</sup> Shulsky, p. 36.

<sup>79</sup> Shulsky, pp. 35, 38, 39.

<sup>80</sup> Denny Roy, *China's Foreign Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), p. 217.

<sup>81</sup> See Zalmay Khalilzad, et al., *The United States and a Rising China* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1999), p. 85, and Alistair Iain Johnston, "China's New 'Old Thinking,'" *International Security* 20 (Winter 1995/96):21.

<sup>82</sup> Robert S. Ross, "The 1995-96 Taiwan Strait Confrontation: Coercion, Credibility, and the Use of Force," *International Security* 25 (2000):104.

<sup>83</sup> I agree with Betts and Christensen , p. 28, about this. China will use the available military, economic, and political options to achieve its goal.

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, Roy, "Tensions in the Taiwan Strait," p. 78.

<sup>85</sup> As a matter of interest that may or may not be significant, Jiang Zimen is reported to admire the Qin Emperor Kangxi. Kangxi was an empire builder who expanded China's boundaries to its greatest extent and forcibly incorporated Taiwan into the empire. He "combined 'force' and 'enticement' to defeat the then independent regime of Taiwan." Alan P. L. Liu, "A Convenient Crisis: Looking behind Beijing's Threats against Taiwan," *Issues & Studies* 36 (September/October 2000):118-119.

<sup>86</sup> Eric A. McVadon, "The Chinese Military and the Peripheral States in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Security Tour d'Horizon," p. 34, in Larry M. Wortzel (ed.), *The Chinese Armed Forces in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Strategic Studies Institute (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 1999).

<sup>87</sup> "Taiwan's domestic political development is gradually pulling the island away from reunification with China. Leaders in Beijing remain uncertain as how to respond, but know their nationalist agenda gives them little scope for compromise," Bernice Lee, *The Security Implications of the New Taiwan*, Adelphi Paper 331, International Institute for Strategic Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 53.

<sup>88</sup> Shulsky, p. 46.

<sup>89</sup> Roy, "Tensions in the Taiwan Strait," p. 90, and interview with Dr. Leif Rosenberger at CINCPAC headquarters, November 13, 2000.

<sup>90</sup> Wachman, pp. 17-18.

<sup>91</sup> "To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill." Sun Zi, *The Art of War*, trans. by Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 77. Those who understand this as the essence of Sun Zi's advice forget that it is surrounded by several hundred other sentences about how to fight wars, campaigns, and battles.

<sup>92</sup> Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Policy Priorities for the United States* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), pp. 197-198.

<sup>93</sup> Mark Burles and Abram N. Shulsky, *Patterns in China's Use of Force: Evidence from History and Doctrinal Writings* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1999), p. 17.

<sup>94</sup> Maria Hsia Chang, "The Future of Taiwan-Mainland Relations," p. 212, in Bih-jaw Lin and James T. Myers (eds.), *Contemporary China and the Changing International Community* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994).

<sup>95</sup> Robert S. Ross, "The 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis: Lessons for the United States, China, and Taiwan," *Security Dialogue* 27 (1996):468.

<sup>96</sup> Jianxiang Bi, "Managing Taiwan Operations in the Twenty-first Century: Issues and Options," *Naval War College Review* 52 (1999):38.

<sup>97</sup> The closest I can find to this position is Zalmay Khalizad, "Congage China," RAND Issue Paper (Santa Monica: RAND, 1999), p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> But "Taiwan also has taken extensive measures to protect its most sensitive government and financial information against intruders." James H. Anderson, "Tensions Across the Strait: China's Military Options Against Taiwan Short of War," Backgrounder Executive Summary (Washington: Heritage Foundation, 1999), p. 5.

<sup>99</sup> Shlapak, Orlesky, and Wilson, p. 60.

<sup>100</sup> Garver, p. 97.

<sup>101</sup> Interview of Nicholas Kristoff at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government on October 4, 2000.

<sup>102</sup> Michael O'Hanlon, "Why China Cannot Conquer Taiwan," *International Security* 25 (2000):83.

<sup>103</sup> John Garver says, "China's nuclear signaling during 1995-96 was designed to tell Washington and the American populace that China was determined to proceed with its coercion of Taiwan and that U.S. intervention would result in a Sino-U.S. war that would be open-ended, very costly, and difficult to conclude." (Garver, p. 133). An attendee at the March 2001 conference on "The Rise of China," afraid China shows insufficient responsibility in the way it uses its nuclear status, commented that during the Cold War, no Soviet leader ever threatened nuclear attack on specific American cities if the U.S. intervened conventionally in a conflict the Soviet Union was interested in.

<sup>104</sup> Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, "China-Taiwan: U.S. Debates and Policy Choices," *Survival* 40 (Winter 1998-99):160.

<sup>105</sup> Both China and Taiwan recognize American intervention almost certainly would be in support of Taiwan, the only questions being the nature and extent of that intervention.

<sup>106</sup> Central News Agency (Taipei), "Poll Shows Americans Would Oppose Using Troops to Defend Taiwan," February 14, 2001 (downloaded from the Taiwan Security Research homepage on February 22, 2001). The poll found 51 percent opposed and 37 percent in favor, but the report did not provide the questions asked or explain clearly how the survey was conducted. From my reading of the story, the survey does not appear to have been a scientific random sampling.

<sup>107</sup> "Even without formal obligations, many in the region think of Washington as Taipei's friend and patron, and might question their own relations with the U.S. if it stood aside." Tucker, p. 153.

<sup>108</sup> Charles W. Freeman, Jr., "Same Strait, Different Memories," p. 59, in Gerret W. Gong (ed.), *Remembering and Forgetting: The Legacy of War and Peace in East Asia* (Washington: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 1996).

<sup>109</sup> Burles and Shulsky, p. vii.

<sup>110</sup> See Shlapak, Orlesky, and Wilson, p. xxi.

<sup>111</sup> Ellis and Koca, p. 7.

<sup>112</sup> Freeman, "Same Strait, Different Memories," p. 59.

<sup>113</sup> Thomas J. Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance, and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security* 23 (1999):67.

<sup>114</sup> Qingxin Ken Wong, "Taiwan in Japan's Relations with China and the United States after the Cold War," *Pacific Affairs* 73 (2000):360.

<sup>115</sup> Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York: Vintage, 1998), p. 149.

<sup>116</sup> Michael Pillsbury, "Dangerous Chinese Misperceptions: The Implications for DOD" (Washington: Department of Defense Office of New Assessment, 1998), pp. 2, 4.



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